

An Excellent Exemplar

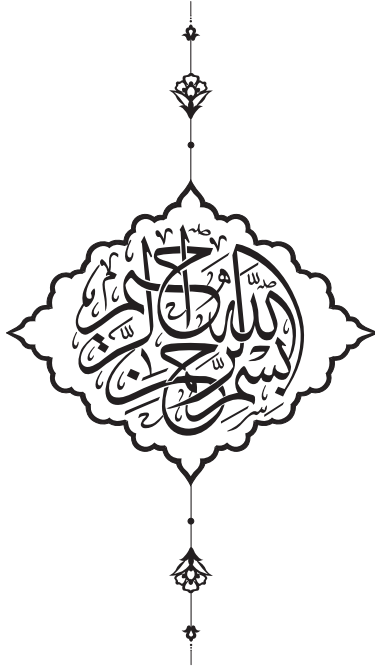
(Uswatun Hasanah)

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In Servitude – In Morals – In Manners
The Most Perfect Human Being
(Peace be upon Him)



Prof. Dr. Ömer Çelik - Dr. Mustafa Öztürk
Dr. Murat Kaya



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AN EXCELLENT EXEMPLAR

(Uswatun Hasanah)

Original Title: Üsve-i Hasene 1: Kullukta, Ahlakta, Adapta

Author : Prof. Dr. Ömer Çelik,
Assistant Prof. Mustafa Öztürk,
Dr. Murat Kaya

Translators : İsmail Eriş

Editor : Vanessa Rose, Emine Güngör

Cover design : Rasim Şakiroğlu

Printed by : Erkam Printhouse

ISBN : 978-9944-83-611-1

Address : İkitelli Organize Sanayi Bölgesi Mah.
Atatürk Bulvarı, Haseyad 1. Kısım
No: 60/3-C Başakşehir, İstanbul, Turkey

Tel : (90-212) 671-0700 pbx

Fax : (90-212) 671-0748

E-mail : info@islamicpublishing.org

Web site : www.islamicpublishing.org

Language : English



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Vol. 1

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“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much.” (Ahzab 33; 21)

ABOUT THE BOOK

“An Excellent Exemplar ...”

We need to understand the meaning of these two words very well and reflect their dimension related to our daily lives and to our personalities, because these are the words which are employed by our Lord to characterize His Messenger (pbuh) in His Holy Book.

Allah the Most Glorious states the phrase, **“an excellent example,”** in his Book. We can find our Lord in this phrase; we can find His Messenger (pbuh) in this phrase; we can even find ourselves, the entire human kind, in this phrase.

Our Creator presents the most perfect example in front of us, at which we should try to reach, try to resemble and unite ourselves with.

This is stated in the following verse:

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much.” (Al-Ahzab 33; 21)*¹

If we think about in every moment of our lives that we are going to meet our Lord; if we are aware that belief in Judgment Day and the Hereafter is one of the basic principles of faith; and if the perception of togetherness with Allah the Almighty has permeated in every one of our cells, then we need to hold the hands of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh); because this journey can only be achieved with his help.

To learn, understand, and teach the life of our beloved Prophet have always been our object as the members of Altinoluk family. If our Lord charac-

1. * For English translation of the verses, I have benefited from Shakir, M.H. (Trans.), *The Qur'an* = [*Al-Qur'an Al-hakim*], Elmhurst, N.Y.: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1997; Pickthall, Marmaduke William, *The Meaning Of The Glorious Koran; An Explanatory Translation*, New York: Dorset Press, [1988?]; And Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, *The Glorious Qur'an Text, Translation And Commentary*, Mcgregor & Werner, 1946 (Translator)





terizes our Prophet as “**an excellent exemplar**”, then we need to try to understand him as being an exemplar. Our lives should gain their meaning through him; through carrying his life into ours, into our hearts, and into every limb of our body. This will illuminate our lives.

Two young researchers from the “Center for Scholarly Research – ILAM”, **Assistant Prof. Mustafa Öztürk** and **Dr. Murat Kaya**, together with **Prof. Dr. Ömer Çelik** from Marmara University, Department of Theology, rolled up their sleeves and began to write the book that you have in your hands. They meticulously searched the corpus of *hadith* (sayings and traditions of the Prophet) and the collections of Islamic history. They looked into the books and collected everything they could find about the exemplary life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Then they organized their findings into meaningful chapters and prepared this invaluable two-volume book.

Covering every single aspect of Prophet Muhammad’s life was certainly a very difficult job and it was inevitable to have some deficiencies in such a hard job. We also realized how hard it was going to be to collect the life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in such a small book. However, we did not give up. Because we were happy to present humanity every beauty we could find in his exemplary life.

We can certainly say these three young scholars have done a great job and put a bouquet of beauties in front of us. They, too, know that there is a sea of beauties they left behind. Even though they have done their best, they are aware there is still much to do ahead.

In this book, you will find outstanding examples about the religious and moral life of the Prophet (pbuh) and his interactions with other people. Other areas of Prophet’s exemplary life require further studies.

First we thank Allah for making us part of such beautiful projects. Then we appreciate the efforts of the three young writers.

Before we leave you with this wonderful book, we conclude this section with a prayer that May Allah make us neighbors to our beloved Prophet (pbuh) in the eternal afterlife.

Amin ...





GUIDE FOR ETERNAL HAPPINESS,
AN EXEMPLARY CHARACTER

By Osman Nuri Topbaş

The Human Reality

Allah the Almighty created everything in this world and in the skies for the use of human beings,² but He has also expressed that He did not leave humanity uncontrolled without a purpose.³ He has taken the course of life under His command by issuing Divine rules and regulations for the people and for the universe. Thus, He has established a nice balance between freedom and responsibility. Human beings are ordered to get united with the harmony of the universe in the following verse:

“And the heaven, He raised it high, and He made the balance; that you exceed not the balance.” (Rahman 55; 7-8) However, those who are unaware why they came into this world and to where they are going by submitting themselves to mortal desires and temporary pleasures in this world could not form a harmony with the Divine balance in this universe. Unfortunately such people waste their lives in deep heedlessness and whirls of loss.

The wisdom behind this is hidden in the human being. When we look into the human being, we can see that humans have been created with two opposing inclinations, i.e. to do right and wrong, for the purpose of a Divine test. Being subjected to a Divine trial requires having the ability to do both right and wrong and being able to make a choice between them. It is impossible to claim that some natural capabilities, such as reason, perception, will-power, and understanding, are enough to make the positive abilities dominant in human life. If they were enough, Allah the Almighty would not bless Adam (pbuh) with prophethood and convey His messages to humanity through His messengers.

As a matter of fact human’s natural faculties and capabilities can be employed from both positive and negative directions. For instance one of these capabilities, or human intellect, is like a double edged knife. It has the capa-

2. See Qur’an Casiyah 45; 13

3. See Qur’an Qiyamah 75; 36





bility to direct a person both to terrorize others and to perform good deeds. Without the help of intellect, human cannot reach the level of *Ahsan-i Taqwim*⁴ or the best make. On the other hand, it is again the human intellect which reduces his/her level to “*bal hum aḍal*”⁵ or in respect to comprehension it makes some humans more misguided than animals. Therefore, human reason must be disciplined by revelation or the prophetic guidance. When intellect is guided by revelation, it takes people to salvation; however if it lacks this guidance, it causes great calamities. This is why reason must be guided in the direction of Divine contentment.

In fact throughout the history of humanity, many intelligent oppressors did not feel any remorse for their heinous actions, because they thought that their actions were the clever ones. Hulagu Khan, who entered Baghdad and killed four hundred thousand innocent people in the Tigris River, felt no regret for his actions. Fathers in Mecca before Islam used to bury their crying daughters alive, and they felt no regret. For them, cutting a piece of wood or a person had no difference. They even thought that this was their natural and lawful rights.

They were intelligent humans and they had feelings, too; but they acted contrary to what they were supposed to do. Therefore, humans are creatures of Allah which need to be guided into the direction of his/her positive capabilities. If this guidance is not in the direction of prophetic teachings and Divine revelation, human beings’ natural capabilities will take them outside human dignity; lead them to commit many crimes, and show them, unfortunately, these evil acts as natural actions. An intellect which lacks proper guidance blinds its owner’s eyes and kills his/her feeling of mercy.

Allah Almighty’s one of the greatest blessings to humanity, i.e. sending guiding prophets, proves that how much human beings need guidance, warning, advice, and exemplary personalities. As a matter of fact, barbaric people of the age of ignorance, who could bury their daughters alive, turned into monuments of mercy after receiving Divine discipline through the guidance of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

Allah the Most Glorious has made human beings as His viceroy on the earth because of the exceptional attributes bestowed upon them. As we have

4. See Qur’an Tin 95: 4

5. See Qur’an A’raf 7; 179



already mentioned the reason for bestowing upon human beings opposite faculties, which continuously compete with each other, such as soul and inner self, is to test them in this world. Since people have the ability to employ their free-will in both good and evil actions, they have the choice to place themselves somewhere between **“lower than the animals”** and **“superior than the angels.”** The outcome of the fight between the positive and negative attributes of the human nature will determine where a person’s exact place is going to be. This is why only human beings among creation need guidance, discipline, and purification. Allah the Most High states in the following verse that living only by the desires of the inner self without divine guidance is similar to, even worse than, the lives of the animals:

“And certainly We have created for hell many of the jinn and the men; they have hearts with which they do not understand, and they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear; they are as cattle, nay, they are in worse errors; these are the heedless ones.” (A’raf 7; 179)

The misery of human beings, who have accepted the trust, which was not accepted by the mountains for its heavy burden, comes from their inextricable inner and outer contradictions; because both the most meritorious deeds and the most brutish disgraces can be found in humans together. An animal side is hidden in an undisciplined and unguided human soul. Some of them are as canny as foxes; some of them are as fierce as hyenas; some of them amass wealth like ants; and some of them are as poisonous as snakes. Some bite while caressing; some drink blood like leeches; and some smile at your face while digging up your grave behind you. These are all attributes of animals. Those who do not protect themselves from tyranny of their inner selves by getting spiritual guidance and training and who do not achieve a strong character are inside the circle of the above mentioned despicable attributes. In some people, one animal’s qualities are in control; and in some others, more than one animal’s attributes are in control. And interestingly since their appearances also begin to resemble to the appearances of the animals, it is not hard for the trained eyes to recognize them.

People, who have different and opposite attributes, live together in a society. This situation resembles the agony of a gazelle which is forced to live in a barn with a bunch of wild and vicious animals. Sometimes a generous person





has to live side by side with a stingy one; a scholar with an ignorant; and a merciful with an oppressor. Stingy people are cruel and coward; and they stay away from helping others; while generous people are merciful, humble, and men of service. Ignorant people do not understand a scholar's state of mind; an oppressor thinks that he is kind and uses force against the people around. In other words those who have the souls of angels have to live together with hyena like people in this world. One of them looks to be on the straight path; while the other thinks that living by the desires of his/her inner self is happiness. The latter thinks that the life is just eating, lust, rank, and similar worldly pleasures.

In fact living in a world where opposite characters exist is a very difficult test, which people have to pass in order to attain Divine unity. This is the main goal of the human beings. This goal can only be reached by purifying oneself from bad manners and establishing good manners and living in such a manner that fits human honor and dignity.

Human body was created from earth and it will return to earth. From this point, humans share similar attributes with other creation. It is obligatory for a human to control his/her selfish desires and purify his/her soul. Otherwise, he/she cannot save himself/herself from yielding the desires of the Devil and his/her self. Then his/her soul gets weakened as stated in the following verse:

“And by the soul and Him Who made it perfect, and inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. He is indeed successful who purifies it. And he is indeed a failure who corrupts it.”

(Shams 91; 7-10)

Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) interprets the right and wrong mentioned in these verses with the following metaphor:

*“O seeker of truth! If you would like to learn the truth, it is that Moses and Pharaoh are not dead. They live in your being and they continue their fight; therefore you must seek these two adversaries in yourself.”*⁶⁷

Again in this regard, Rumi (q.s.) states that:

6. *Mathnawi*, Vol. Iii, 1253

7. * For The English Translation Of Mathnawi, I have benefited from *The Mathnawī Of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī, Edited From The Oldest Manuscripts Available, With Critical Notes, Translation & Commentary*, Ed. Reynold A. Nicholson, Konya Metropolitan Municipality, 2004



“Do not feed your body excessively; for it is a sacrifice which will finally be buried into the earth. You should try to feed your soul; since it is the one which will be honored and elevated up to the Supremes.”

“Feed little to your body; because those who feed their body more than enough are beaten by the desires of their inner self and become despicable in the end.”

“The body that has defect in its spirit will never become sweet, (even) if you smear it with honey.”⁸

Similitude of a soul, which is not disciplined by prophetic guidance, is a tree whose roots are rotten. You can see the signs of its rottenness in its leaves, branches, and fruits. When there is an illness in a heart, its effects and damages can be seen in the motions of the body. The illnesses which badly affect the body are selfish attributes like pride, jealousy, envy, and grudge. These spiritual sicknesses must be treated and the first step in their treatment is to follow the path for the contentment of Allah the Most Glorious.

However, in this regard humans, who have different personalities, need exemplary characters to follow; because, **“imitation”** and **“taking someone as an example”** are two of the most important tendencies of human beings in establishing their personalities.

The Tendency to Imitate and to Take Someone as an Example

Human beings need examples to imitate in every aspect of their lives from the moment they are born; because they learn their language, religion, morality, habits, and everything which shape their thinking, belief, and deeds from previous examples. Though, some small exceptions can be found, this is usually true. For instance, a child learns whatever language his/her parents speak. Then he/she can learn a second, third, and fourth language from other exemplary personalities. In other words, people’s education is nothing but, in addition to other agents, making them use their natural ability to imitate positive and negative examples from before them. In this way, people are affected from their parents and their environment; and in the extent of the strength of their ability to imitate, they join into society as a good or bad personality.

8. Mathnawi, Vol. V, 593





Even though learning a language and other similar outwardly characteristics usually do not constitute a big problem, great and serious obstacles emerge before achieving good manners and strong spirituality; because obstacles like the Devil and human ego try to deceive humans to do the opposite while imitating the meritorious deeds.

On the other hand, if people do not shape their religious, moral, and spiritual world based on the examples of mature and eminent personalities, such as prophets and friends of Allah, they will go astray and turn their eternal happiness into frustration and disappointment. In this respect, people always need fine, elegant, and soft-hearted personalities to follow. This is why people admire those whom they accept as their guides and try to imitate them as much as they can. What an awful waste and failure the situation of those today who try to imitate only the actors/actresses and accept them as their guides is! As a matter of fact this frightful state is nothing but the result of presenting an empty heart to wrong people in order to be filled. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) explains this state with the following example:

“It is no wonder that the sheep recoiled from the wolf; the wonder is that this sheep set its heart on (becoming friendly with) the wolf.”⁹

Exemplary Characteristics of the Prophets

It is an undeniable fact that loving others, admiring their characters, and trying to imitate them is a natural characteristic of human beings. In this respect, to find the right examples and to follow their footsteps is very important for human beings. This is why Allah the Most Glorious, because of His Kindness and Generosity, sent human beings not just guiding books, but also His messengers who were endowed with several lofty qualities and who were the living examples of His books. They were such personalities that they presented the perfect examples in religious, scholarly, and ethical deeds and behaviors. In fact every one of these prophets manifested the highest examples of good behaviors and gave humanity exceptional services.

For instance, when we examine the life of the prophet Noah (pbuh), the first thing we observe is his invitation to faith, patience, forbearance, and his hatred towards disbelief. Abraham’s (pbuh) life passed in struggle with disbe-

9. *Mathnawi*, Vol. I, 1293



lief and idolatry; and he also manifested an excellent example for us with his trust and complete submission to Divine Will when he was faced with being thrown into Nimrod's fire. Again the life of Moses (pbuh) passed in fight with Pharaoh and his men's oppression. With the help of the legal system, which he brought, he also established social order for his followers. The distinguishing characteristic of the mission of Jesus (pbuh) was that his heart was full of mercy and compassion towards humans. Lofty characteristics such as his modesty and treatment of others with tender-heartedness draw our attention. Despite his magnificent wealth and kingdom, Solomon (pbuh) maintained his modesty and gratefulness towards his Lord. Similarly, we can observe lofty manifestations of patience and forbearance of all kinds of troubles and gratefulness towards Allah under any circumstances in the life of Job (pbuh). Jonah's (pbuh) life is a perfect example of regret and repentance for his mistake and trusting and turning towards Allah the Almighty. Joseph (pbuh) lived the apex of submission and commitment to Allah the Most Glorious. He maintained his decency even when he was seduced by a wealthy, famous, and beautiful woman. The life of David (pbuh) is filled with exemplary scenes. His remembrance and thankfulness of Allah in tears because of the fear of Allah and his turning towards the Lord of the worlds in supplication are wonderful examples for us. Jacob's (pbuh) life is another example of patience and not feeling despair even under the most desperate times of life. He never lost hope from the mercy of Allah the Most High.

In order to live in religious peace and happiness the family of humanity, which began with Adam and Eve (peace and blessings be upon them), adopted the Qabah in Mecca as their first place of worship. Sons of Adam, who were spread around the world because of their social and essential needs, were now and then enlightened by the Messengers of Allah. They kept their religious lives alive and thus stayed loyal to the Divine realities which were distorted from time to time by ignorant people and destroyers of religion since Adam (pbuh). However, Allah the Almighty continuously sent His Messengers, who corrected their distortions, and revived His religion. In this way, humanity has been saved from individual and social crisis.

Finally, the age of happiness came and with the birth of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), religion reached its peak again at the place where it originally started. After the perfection of religion with Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), it is impossible to imagine a higher state of religion; because, revival





of the divine message has ended with the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam has become the religion with which Allah consents. Therefore, the most perfect example for human tendency of imitating others has been displayed in front of us.

Our Guide for the Eternal Salvation, Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh)

The history of the prophets and the first page on the calendar of the prophets begins with the blessing of the first creation *Nur Muhammadi*, or the spiritual light of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), to the first human being. The last page on this calendar ends with the arrival of the material being of Prophet Muhammad to this world. In this way, this prophetic light, which came down through – according to a narration – a chain of one hundred and twenty four thousand prophets, was passed to its rightful owner. In other words, this lofty light came down to Muhammad's (pbuh) father, Abdullah, through a pure and honorable line and with the pregnancy of Muhammad's (pbuh) mother, Aminah, it passed from Abdullah's forehead to this fortunate lady. It finally passed from her to its original owner the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The universe came into being from the spiritual light of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). If a piece of earth from the essence of the Prophet Muhammad were not placed into the essence of Prophet Adam (pbuh), Adam's (pbuh) repentance would not have been accepted, as it is stated in the following saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

When Adam (pbuh) realized his mistake, which had caused him to be expelled from Paradise, he said:

"Dear Lord! I ask from You to forgive me for the sake of Muhammad (pbuh)."

Allah the Most High asked:

"O Adam! How do you know Muhammad even if I have not created him, yet?"

Adam (pbuh) replied:

"Dear Lord! When You created me and breathed into me from Your Spirit, I raised my head and saw that the following sentences had been written over the pillars of the heaven: "La ilaha illa Allah Muhammadun Rasulullah –



There is no god save Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.” Just then I realized that You would only attribute the most lovable of Your creation to Your name.”

Upon Adam’s (pbuh) respond, Allah the Almighty said:

*“You are right O Adam! In fact for Me, he is the most loveable of all creation. Ask anything from Me for the sake of him; (Since you have already asked your forgiveness) then I forgave you. **“If Muhammad had not existed, I would not have created you.”**”* (Hakim, *Mustadrak*, II, 672)

Adam (pbuh) made the Messenger of Allah as mediator for his supplication and he was blessed with Divine forgiveness. The light of this honorable messenger was inherited by the descendants of Abraham (pbuh); Fire became cool and comfort for him.¹⁰ When this lofty pearl went into Ishmael’s (pbuh) nacre, a ram was sent down from heaven in his name.

As it is observed, even prophets were blessed by Divine mercy out of respect to him. There even existed prophets, such as Moses (pbuh), who wished to be one of his followers.¹¹ In a way, every single one of the rings in the chain of the prophets (peace and blessings be upon them) were giving the good news of the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

The long expected light finally honored this world just before dawn on the twelfth day of the month of Rabiul Awwal in the year 571 CE. With his light Allah’s Mercy filled this world. Day and night became different. Feelings were deepened and words, conversations, and everything gained different meanings. Idols fell down; the pillars and towers of the Chosroes’ palaces in the city of Madayin crashed down. The Sawah Lake dried up. Souls were filled with blessings and abundance.

These were manifestations of the first blessings of the Noble Being. The blessings soon encompassed the entire universe and all of time and space.

The life of Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh), the chief of the prophets, was like an endless sea and the lives of the rest of the prophets were like rivers flowing into that sea. He had all the more known and unknown distinguishing characteristics of a hundred and twenty four thousand prophets, which came

10. Cf. Qur’an Anbiya 21; 69

11. Tabari, *Tafsir*, IX, 87-88; Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir*, II, 259 (Part Of The Commentary On Chapter Seven (A’raf) Verse 154)





before him, and he was the apex of all good manners and attributes. He was sent as the final messenger of Allah and had an exemplary personality, possessed both the advancements of human thinking achieved up to his time and the possible needs of humanity till the end of days.

In fact, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) describes his high moral attributes as follows:

“I was sent to perfect good moral traits.” (Malik, *Muwatta*, Husn al-Khuluq, 8)

Uswa al-Hasanah / An Excellent Exemplar

Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh) is the only prophet, maybe the only human being, in history, whose life has been recorded with all its details. Only a limited amount of the stories of the prophets have reached us; whereas, all actions, sayings, and every detail of the spiritual life of the final Messenger of Allah (pbuh) have been observed and recorded. And with the blessing of Allah the Almighty, these recordings have attained the honor to be narrated as long as human beings exist in this world.

In order to protect ourselves from mischief resulted from all kinds of calamities, evil, and the surprises of life, we have to apply good morals, such as modesty, patience, bravery, altruism, sacrifice, contentment, and living a balanced life, into our lives. In order to be an excellent example with all the above mentioned good manners, Allah the Almighty sent Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the most perfect human being, to humanity

The life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) will be an example for all future generations until the end of the world. About the Prophet (pbuh), it is stated in the Qur'an:

“(O My Messenger!) And most surely you shall have a reward never to be cutoff. And you stand on an exalted standard of character.” (Qalam 68; 3-4)

The life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and his blessed personality presents us with the apex of human behaviors. He (pbuh) was an exemplary person who personally lived according to his own teachings and became a living example for his followers. Allah the Most High presented him as *uswa al-hasanah* or an excellent exemplar to entire humanity.



It is stated in a verse that:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن
كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَ الْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day and remembers Allah much.” (al-Ahzab 33; 21)

The Prophet (pbuh) displayed an exceptional goodness and perfection in every aspect of life. Both essential and detailed behavioral perfection can be seen in his blessed life. Thus, everyone can find the best and most perfect behaviors to take as an example from the life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). In other words, the life of the Messenger of Allah is like a bouquet of the best roses, from which everyone can find the best rose which fits his/her needs.

The Prophet (pbuh) is the best example even for those who are at extreme ends of society. For instance, a prisoner’s life cannot be an example for a judge and a judge’s life cannot be an example for a prisoner. Furthermore, the life of a poor person who spends all his time in search for his livelihood, cannot be an example for a wealthy person, who enjoys all the luxuries of life; whereas the life of the Messenger of Allah presents examples for both parties. Allah the Almighty started his life as an orphan who was socially at the bottom level of the community and made him go through all the steps of life up to the highest and most powerful level which was prophethood and the head of the state. All of the stages of his life display examples for all types of ups and downs in people’s lives. For this reason, his life is an actual, tangible, and excellent example for those who want to imitate him in the extent of their capacities.

People, especially philosophers, who try to explain everything with their limited intellect and who claim to guide others to the straight path and who try to be an example to others, other than the Prophets and their righteous followers, will always be deficient in this respect. Since the prophets base their knowledge on Divine revelation, they came as guides confirming each others’ messages; whereas, philosophers, who aim to guide others to the truth, contradict and confute each other since they lack Divine verification and rely on





their inadequate intellects. This is why they can neither find the straight path themselves nor guide societies to it.

For instance, because Aristotle lacked Divine guidance, even though he is considered to be the one who laid down the principles of the philosophy of ethics, we can see that no one in history found happiness by following his principles. Because philosophers' hearts are not purified and their souls are not cleansed, their actions and thoughts are not matured with the support of revelation.

The only way to refrain from the calamities of which people fall through due to their mental abilities and selfish tendencies, which are not disciplined by divine revelation, is to hold on to the strongest rope, i.e. the Holy Qur'an, which is presented to humanity by the final Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Real and tangible illustrations of the realities of the Holy Qur'an can be found in the life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Therefore, the most significant thing for a human being to do is to find the straight path under the guidance of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh).

In addition, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had people love him because of his loyalty, righteousness, and straightforwardness even before he received the Divine revelation. He was called **"Muhammad al-Amin or trustworthy Muhammad,"** by Meccan polytheist because of the excellence in his actions. He began conveying his Sacred message after proving his excellence in the eyes of his community.

People knew and admired his trustworthy character even before his prophethood. When the members of his tribe, who gave him the nickname **"al-Amin – trustworthy,"** fell in disagreement about who would have the honor to place the black stone in its place during the reconstruction of the Ka'bah, everyone accepted his solution without any objection.

The Messenger of Allah was so trustable among his community that even his uncle Abu Sufyan, who was, before his conversion to Islam, one of the greatest enemies of the Prophet (pbuh), could not help but give the following response to the question of Byzantium's Emperor Heraclius on whether the Prophet (pbuh) had ever broken his promises:

"No, he has never lied and never broken his promises."



We can attain the real benefit from his exemplary life, if we show the same submission to his message as Abu Bakr (r.a.) displayed during the incident of Mi'raj or Prophet's ascension to the heavens. When Abu Bakr was asked about his opinion about the Mi'raj, he unhesitatingly said that

“If the Prophet (pbuh) said that, then it is true.”

Another good example, which shows why he was called, “***Muhammad al-Amin***,” even by the polytheists is as follows:

During the Battle of Haybar, a Jewish shepherd named Yasar came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). After having some conversation with the Prophet (pbuh), he converted to Islam and wanted to join the Muslim army. However, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) told him to first return the sheep to their owners and then to come back and join the Muslims. It was really difficult times for Muslims and they were having a food shortage. Certainly, this is a wonderful example of how a Muslim should have the consciousness of responsibility and be sensitive about people's trust even under the most difficult circumstances.

As proven by historical sources, many non-Muslims have compelled to confirm Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) exemplary character. Some of the many samples of them are given below.

Philosopher La Fayette, who was among the master minds of 1789 French revolution, examined the legal systems of his time before writing the famous “**Declaration of Human rights**.” When he saw the greatness of Islamic law, he said:

“O Muhammad! Nobody has reached the level of justice you achieved.”

Another example is as follows:

In the middle of the 20th century, a group of scholars convened in La Hague, Holland where they selected the hundred greatest men of world history. Even though all members of the selection committee were Christians, they selected Muhammad (pbuh) as number one on their list.

The real merit for a Muslim is to have such good qualities that even non-Muslims should feel compelled to confirm his/her rights. And the most perfect example in this respect is the merits and subtlety of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).





An Exemplary Character and His Good Manners

As we have mentioned before, it is impossible to find someone in history whose life is examined and recorded as detailed as the life of the Prophet (pbuh). Many volumes would not be sufficient, if every aspect of his exemplary life were attempted to be written.

In Islamic sciences, different aspects of Prophet's life are taken as main foundations¹² and as the basis of *ijtihad*.¹³ This is why different aspects of Prophet's (pbuh) life have been examined by different Islamic sciences.

In fact, all of the Islamic books written from the last fourteen hundred years are written only to interpret one book or the Holy Qur'an and one person or the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had exceptional beauty both in the material sense as well as in the spiritual sense. An example of this would be when one day when Khalid b. Walid (r.a.) stopped by an Arab tribe and the head of the tribe asked him:

"O Khalid! Depict us the physical and spiritual characteristics of the Messenger of Allah."

Khalid (r.a.) replied:

"This is impossible. No words can be sufficient to describe him." The chieftain of the tribe insisted saying:

"At least tell us about him as much as you can do."

Khalid (r.a.) gave them the following magnificent response:

"The one who is sent would fit with the dignity of the sender. Since the sender of the Prophet (pbuh) is the Creator of the entire existence, then imagine the glory of the Messenger whom He sent."¹⁴

12. Qur'an And Sunnah Of The Prophet, Which Are Also Called *Naṣṣ*, Are The Bases Of Islamic Sciences. Sunnah Means The Sayings, Actions, And Approvals Of The Messenger Of Allah. If Something Is Clearly Stated In The Qur'an Or In Sunnah, There Is No Place For Personal Reasoning About It.

13. *Ijtihad* Means A Legal Scholar's Personal Reasoning Performed Within Certain Rules In Order To Issue An Opinion In Cases Where There Is No Clear Ruling In The Qur'an And Sunnah.

14. Cf. Munawi, *Fayḍ Al-Qadir*, V, 92; Imam Kastalânî, *Mevâhib-I Ledünniyye Tercümesi*, P. 417.



We understand from the statement of Khalid b. Walid (r.a.) that it is impossible to properly describe the physical and spiritual beauty of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). In this regard, Imam Qurtubi says:

“All of the beauties of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) are not shown to us. If they were shown, our eyes would not be able to look at him.”

In fact, even among those who were always with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) there were very few people who could stare at the Prophet’s beautiful face out of their respect for him. According to some reports, during sermons of the Prophet (pbuh) only Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) could look at his face, and the rest of the companions would look down.

Amr b. al-ʿAs (r.a.), the conqueror of Egypt, expresses this situation in his following statement:

“I was with the Messenger of Allah for a long time. Then no one was as dear to me than the Messenger of Allah and none was more sublime in my eyes than he, Never could I, pluck courage to catch a full glimpse of his face due to its splendor. So if I am asked to describe his features, I cannot do that for I have not eyed him fully.” (Muslim, *Kitāb al-Imān*, 192; Ahmad b. Hanbal, IV, 199)

With our limited ability and capability, it is impossible for us to completely comprehend the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who was a wonderful creation, because our understanding of him in this world is not enough to explain and comprehend him. Just like the impossibility of fitting an ocean into a small glass, proper comprehension of the Muhammadan light is impossible.

Let us give some of the exceptional examples from His exemplary personality within the limits of our understanding.

The blessed face of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was the purest and most beautiful of the faces, which was dispersing peace and assurance to everyone around him. During the migration to Medina, Abdullah b. Salam, a Jewish scholar, curiously asked for the Messenger of Allah, and when he found him, he said looking at his face:

“This face can never tell a lie.” Then he converted to Islam.

The beauty, peace, splendor, majesty, and charm in his face was so much that he did not need another miracle, proof, or evidence to prove his prophethood.





Whenever he (pbuh) liked or disliked something, it was easily understood from the change in his face.

Fitness, a strong feeling of modesty, and determination were combined in his pure body. He was more bashful than a young virgin. And the level of his tenderheartedness could not be decently elucidated.

He (pbuh) would not stare at people's faces. He usually looked down more than he raised his gaze up. Because of his modesty and great personality, he would not tell anyone his/her faults to his/her face. He would not openly tell the name of the person who had done something wrong; instead he would say that *"What is wrong with those who do such and such..."* Sometimes he would attribute the fault to himself and nicely warn his followers saying that: *"What is happening to me that I see you are doing such and such ..."*

There was beauty in his face, fluency in his speech, elegance in his actions, eloquence in his talk, and purity in his speech. He would not talk in vain; every one of his words was full of wisdom and advice. There was no gossip and useless talk in his speech. He would choose his words according to everyone's level of understanding.

He was gentle and modest. He would not laugh loudly; but he always had a smiling face.

Those who saw him for the first time would be seized by awe; while those who had a chance to converse with him would fall in love with him.

He would show his respect to people according to their levels; and he would generously help his relatives. Just like he treated his own family, he would treat others gently and graciously.

He would pay special attention to his servants. He would have them wear whatever he wore and have them eat whatever he ate. He was generous, merciful, compassionate, and brave when it was necessary and gentle when it was needed.

It is not possible to properly appreciate his generosity. His generosity was more than the generosity of someone who would not fear poverty.

As it is reported by Jabir b. 'Abdullah: *"It never happened that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was asked for anything and he said: No."* (Muslim, Fada'il, 56)



He was the one who visited his relatives most; the one who showed most mercy and compassion to people; the one who treated others in the best way; the one who abstained from bad manners most; and the one who had the best manners.

He was trustworthy and always kept his promises. He was better than other people in good manners and intelligence; and he was well-deserved for all kinds of praises.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) always felt sadness and continuously contemplated. He would not speak unless it was absolutely needed. His silence was long. When he began to talk, he would not stop in the middle of what he was talking about. His words were clear, and they were neither too many nor too few. Even though he was a gentle person, he was strong and awe-inspiring.

He would not get angry except when a right was violated or the performing of an Islamic rule was prevented. When someone's right was violated, he would be angry until his/her right was returned and only then he would calm down. He would never get upset for personal reasons. He would not defend himself or dispute about his personal issues.

He would never enter someone's house unless he had permission to enter. When he was at home, he would divide his time into three, one part for worshipping Allah, one part for his family, and one part for himself. During the time he spared for himself, he would take care of people's problems. He would never leave anyone deprived. Thus, he would earn everyone's love and respect.

He would not sit in the same part of the mosque, but he would sit in different parts in order to prevent his followers from developing a custom for one place. He would not approve attributing sanctity to places and behaviors which would cause pride in congregation. When he went into a congregation, he would not look for a special place but sit wherever was empty; and he would ask everyone to do the same.

When someone asked for something from him, he would not feel comfortable until carrying out his/her request no matter how insignificant or significant it was. When he did not have the means to take care of his/her request, then he would at least say nice words and try to relieve him/her. He would always share others' grievances and problems. As a human being, everyone would



see the same treatment from him whether he/she was a scholar or an ignorant person or rich or poor. All of his meetings were places where patience, shyness, knowledge, trust, and loyalty were active and prevalent.

He would never reproach anyone for his/her faults and defects; when a warning was needed, he would do it without offending him/her. He would never search for others' mistakes and he would strongly prohibit his followers from such an action.

He would not talk about issues unless he hoped religious rewards for it. He was in a state of spiritual rapture during his sermons. His companions were so attentive in his speeches that according to Umar's (r.a.) report, they would sit like they had a bird on their heads and they did not want to scare it away. Because his companions' imitated their manners and shyness from him, they would often think asking questions as insolence. For this reason, they would wait for a Bedouin to come and ask the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) a question about Islam so they, too, could benefit from his answer. Bedouins were people of the desert who would ask things easily due to their harshness.

Also, it is not possible to imagine a hero braver than the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) because he was never seen being scared or in a state of panic. When he faced abnormal situations, he would keep calm and remain patient, and he would never make a mistake as a result of being scared. He fearlessly passed through the Meccans, who were waiting to kill him, by reciting the following verses:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ أَغْلَالًا فَهِيَ إِلَى الْأَذْقَانِ فَهُمْ مُقْمَحُونَ. وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ.

“We have put yokes round their necks right up to their chins, so that their heads are forced up (and they cannot see). And We have put a bar in front of them and a bar behind them, and further, We have covered them up; so that they cannot see.” (Yasin 36; 8 - 9)

Aisha (r.a.) narrates:

“At the most fierce moments of the Battle of Badr, sometimes we were hiding behind Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He was the bravest one among us. He would stay at the closest places to the enemy.” (Ahmad b. Hanbal, I, 86)

Bara’ b. Azib says that:

“When the battle grew fierce, we, by Allah, would seek protection by his side, and the bravest among us was he who confronted the onslaught and it was the Holy Prophet (pbuh)” (Muslim, Jihad, 79)

He would always fight in the front row in order to exalt the word of Allah. At first in the Battle of Hunayn, the Muslim army began to break up, but the Prophet (pbuh) did not panic or lose his firmness. He attacked the enemy and increased his companions’ courage and finally they won the battle with the help of Allah the Almighty.

He (pbuh) says that:

“I swear by Allah with whose Will and Power I live, I would want to fight for the sake of Allah and become a martyr; then get resurrected and go and fight again and become a martyr; then fight again and become a martyr...” (Muslim, Imarah, 103)

Aisha (r.a.) describes some of the manifestations of his mercy and compassion as follows:

*“Whenever he had to choose between two things he adopted the easier one, provided it was not sin, but if it was any sin he was the one who was the farthest from it among the people; and Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) never took revenge from anyone because of his personal grievance, unless what Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, had made inviolable had been violated. He never violated the rights of slaves, servants, not even the rights of animals...”*¹⁵

In fact his success in his sacred mission was the blessing of his high manners. Allah the Almighty expresses his perfection in this regard in the following verse:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ
فَطَّاءً غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ...

15. Muslim, *Faḍāil*, 79; Abū Dawūd, *Kitāb Al-Adab*, 4





“Thus it is due to mercy from Allah that you deal with them gently, and had you been rough, hard hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you...” (Al-i Imran 3; 159)

As a matter of fact, people of the age of ignorance were positively affected by his lenient, forgiving, good-mannered, generous, and forbearing character; and they were saved from the hands of savageness and became like moths around the blessed light of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Because He wanted people’s salvation not their destruction; He represented mercy not wrath.

He always was a monument of sincerity. He would never speak out the things which he did not feel in his soul. He was like a living Qur’an with his morality. He did not advise others about the deeds which he did not perform.

In short, he was the most exceptional and exemplary character of human history. His entire life has presented human beings unique qualities, merits, and both material and spiritual beauties about:

1. Servitude to Allah the Almighty
2. Relationship with other humans
3. And morals.

He was such a guide of eternal bliss that he was aware of his responsibility of being an exemplary character for his followers.

In this respect his sensitivity about ritual prayers was beyond everything else. He slept only a very little part of the night; his blessed body often would not see his bed. When everyone was asleep, he was awake, prostrated before Allah the Almighty and was shedding tears for forgiveness. Close to the end of his life, even when his illnesses became very serious, he left his home and went to the mosque to pray in congregation.

With the revelation of the verse of alms giving (zakat), believers have been ordered to pay their zakat and give in charity. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) himself performed this Divine command before anyone else. He lived the requirements of the following command in his own life:

“Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them.” (Baqarah 2; 3) He would also praise the possessions given in charity and those who gave them.



Measures from the Stars

One of the characteristics of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was that he would never amass any worldly possessions and he would spend everything he had for the sake of Allah the Almighty. Abu Dhar (r.a.) reported that:

I walked with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) on the stony ground of Medina in the afternoon and we were looking at Uhud. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“O Abu Dhar!”

I replied:

“Yes, O Messenger of Allah, I am right here.”

He (pbuh) said:

“What I desire is that Uhud be gold with me and three nights should pass and there is left with me any dinar but one coin which I would keep to pay debt.” (Muslim, Zakat, 32; Bukhari, Istiqraz, 3)

Even though there is no obligatory fasting for believers other than the fasting in the month of Ramadan, it was very rare that the Prophet (pbuh) passed a month, even a week, without fasting.

Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) says that:

“Allah’s Apostle used to fast so many days that one would say that he would never stop fasting, and he would abandon fasting so many days that one would say that he would never fast.” (Bukhari, Sawm, 53)

He would not neglect to fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the month, six days from the month of Shawwal, and on the day of Ashurah from the month of Muharram. In addition to these, it was his custom to fast on Mondays and Thursdays.

Sometimes he was fasting two or three days without breaking his fast, which is called *Sawm al-Wisal*. When some of the companions wanted to do the same, he proscribed them from this saying:

“Do not practice Al-Wisal (fasting continuously without breaking one’s fast in the evening or eating before the following dawn).” The people said to the Prophet, “But you practice Al-Wisal?” The Prophet replied,





“I am not like any of you, for I am given food and drink (by Allah) during the night.” (Bukhari, Sawm, 48)

Therefore, we should remember that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is our only guide and exemplary personality; however, it is also very important and obligatory that we know the measure of taking him as an example. His actions and behaviors are divided into two categories:

1. His deeds peculiar to himself
2. His deeds for everyone

Therefore, we are not responsible to do the deeds peculiar to the Prophet (pbuh). Such deeds and behaviors are also like measures from the stars and we are not able to perform them; however, we are responsible to imitate and perform the second type of deeds and behaviors as much as we can.

Even though no one can reach the level of perfection of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), those who follow his footsteps can be a little Muhammad in the inner world. In fact, it is interesting to note that soldiers in the Turkish army are called Mehmetcik meaning little Muhammad.

Spiritual Level required in following the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)

In order to properly benefit from the exemplary character of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), we need to achieve a certain level of spirituality. In fact, in the verse about his exemplary personality, it is stated that:

“Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day and remembers Allah much.” (al-Ahzab 33; 21)

As we can see in the verse, **“having hope in Allah and the Final Day”** and **“remembering Allah much”** count as the two important steps of taking the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) as an example.

Prescribed worships can be performed in prescribed times; however, maintaining faith in the heart is a constant requirement. Showing proper resistance against the hurricanes in the heart can only be achieved with constant remembrance of Allah the Most High.

Allah the Almighty says in various verses that:



“O you who believe! Remember Allah and do this often” (33; 41) However, since no number or amount is mentioned in these verses, remembrance must be at the highest number covering most of one’s time.¹⁶ Then a servant’s responsibility is to remember Allah the Almighty as much as he/she can.

In other verses, it is expressed that:

“The Unbelievers say: why is not a sign sent down to him from his Lord? Say: Surely Allah makes him who will go astray, and guides to Himself those who turn to Him in penitence. Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.” (Ra’d 13; 27-28)

Undoubtedly, remembrance of Allah does not mean just literal repetition of the names of Allah, but it means to place Him at the center of our feelings, i.e. in our hearts, and to feel His tranquility and joy in our bodies. When the heart is adorned with remembrance of Allah, it can be saved from its diseases. Then, it will be cleaned from all kinds of impurities; it will be filled with light, elegance, and sensitivity. Thus, it will become a place which is thirsty for Divine secrets. When the heart beat is balanced according to Allah the Almighty, then all intentions and actions gain level.

In a prophetic saying, it is mentioned that:

“The sign for loving Allah is to love remembering Allah.” (Suyuti, *Al-Jami’ al-Saghir*, II, 52)

In short, in order to benefit from the exemplary personality of the Messenger of Allah, hearts need to be filled with Divine love and should be purified from mortal loves and desires. Remembrance of Allah and intentions to meet Allah should beautify the heart.

Another way to achieve the spiritual level of an appropriate obedience to the exemplary personality of the creation of the light and to embrace his spirituality is to strengthen our spiritual connection with him and to accustom our tongues with the formula of *ṣalawat al-sharifah* or the formula of calling for Divine blessings for the Prophet (pbuh).

16. If There Is No Specific Amount After An Order, Which Draws Its Limits, It Means That The Highest Level Of Performance Of That Order Is Intended.





Salawat al-Sharifah (Calling for Divine blessings for the Prophet (pbuh))

Allah the Almighty swears in the Qur'an upon the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Allah the Glorious states His name with the name of His messenger and proclaims the faith in his prophethood as a precondition for the faith in His Divinity. He also announces that He is not content with those who raise their voices in front of His messenger. He does not approve mentioning the blessed name of His Messenger like an ordinary name. In addition, He states that He and His angels' praise the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and send their blessings to him, and then He orders the followers' of Muhammad to send their blessing for him, too. This is stated in the following verse:

“Allah and His Angels send blessing on the Prophet: o you who believe send your blessings on him, and salute him with all respect.” (al-Ahzab 33; 56) According to this verse, sending blessings for the Messenger of Allah is a Divine requirement.

Ubay b. Ka'b (r.a.) narrates the following incident:

One day, I asked the Messenger of Allah (pbuh): “O Messenger of Allah! I send many blessings for you, but how much should I do that?”

He said: *“As much as you want.”*

I asked again: “If I assign one fourth of my prayers for calling blessings for you, would it be appropriate?”

He said: *“You can assign as much of your prayers as you want, but if you assign more, it would be better for you.”*

I said: *“Then I will assign half of my prayer time for salawat al-sharifah.”*

He said: *“You can assign as much of your prayers as you want, but if you assign more, it would be better for you.”*

I asked again:

“Would two thirds be enough?”

He said: *“As much as you want, but if you assign more, it would be better for you.”*



I said: “Then what do you think if I assign all my prayer time for sending blessings for you?”

He said: “*Then Allah the Almighty appeases all of your troubles and forgives your sins.*” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 23)

This is why the friends of Allah constantly repeat *ṣalawat al-sharifah*; because, the more they send blessings for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) the more the love for him increases in their hearts. Of course getting the proper benefit from his exemplary personality will be in the extent of the increase of love for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in the hearts.

On the other hand, according to the Islamic manners, supplications should begin and end with calling blessings for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Since sending salutations to the Prophet (pbuh) is considered a type of prayer, there is a common belief that it will not be refused by Allah the Almighty. Decorating our supplications with the blessings for the Prophet (pbuh) has originated from this fact. In other words, the belief that squeezing our prayers between two *ṣalawat al-sharifah*, which are expected to be accepted, may enable the acceptance of our prayers, too.

Umar (r.a.) says that:

“*Prayer waits between earth and heaven. It would not ascend to Allah the Almighty, unless blessings and salutations are called for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).*” (Tirmidhi, Witr, 21)

One day the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saw a man praying without saying his gratefulness for Allah the Almighty and without sending blessings for His Messenger. Upon this he said: “*This man hurried up.*” Then he called the man and told him:

“*When one of you wants to pray, first say your gratefulness to Allah the Almighty, and then call for blessings for His Prophet. Finally say your prayers however you would like to pray.*” (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 64)

Ibn Abbas (r.a.) reports the following hadith:

There was a war between the Jews of Khaybar and the tribe of Gatafan, and every time they met in a battle field, the Jews of Khaybar were defeated. Finally they prayed saying:





“O Allah! We want You to bless us with victory for the sake of the Prophet you will send at the end of the Days.” After this prayer they defeated the tribe of Gatafan; however when Allah the Almighty sent the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), they refused his prophethood and the book he brought. Then Allah the Almighty revealed the following verse:

“And when there comes to them a Book from Allah, confirming what is with them - though before that they were asking for a signal triumph over those who disbelieved - when there comes to them that which they (should) have recognized. They refuse to believe in it but the curse of Allah is on those without Faith.” (Baqarah 2; 89) (Qurṭubī, *Al-Ja'mi*, II, 27; Wahidi, *Asbab al-Nuzul*, p. 31)

Even the non-Muslims who used the name of the Messenger of Allah in their prayers received what they asked for and benefited from the mercy and blessings that he brought to the universe.

Allah the Almighty addresses His messenger in the Qur'an as follows:

“But Allah was not going to send them a penalty whilst you were amongst them....” (Anfal 8; 33)

This divine statement was revealed about the polytheists. If this was the reward for the polytheists just because they were physically in the same society with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), then we should think about how great the reward for the believers would be; especially the reward for those who adorn their faith with the love for the Messenger of Allah; their reward will be beyond human imagination. The higher the level of a believer's love for him the greater the reward of the believer in the Hereafter will be.

Fascinating Examples of the Love for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)

The only source of mercy and love that will take a servant to the sea of love for Allah is the love for our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh); because, love for the Messenger of Allah means love for Allah; and obedience to His Messenger means obedience to Him; and rebellion against His Messenger means rebellion against Him.

In the following verse Allah the Almighty states this reality:



“Say: If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your faults, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (Al-i Imran 3; 31)

In the statement of Allah’s unity (*Kalimat al-Tawhid*) after the sentence of “لا اله الا الله” “There is no god but Allah” comes the sentence of “محمد رسول الله” “Muhammad is His Messenger.” Every statement of *tawhid* and every *salawat* takes the servant closer to Allah and increases their love for Allah. Happiness in this world and in the Hereafter can be achieved only by loving Him. This universe is the manifestation of His love. “The light of Muhammad (pbuh)” forms the essence of this manifestation. And the only way to reach the Divine essence is through the love for His Messenger.

Spiritual taste in worship, elegance in daily transactions, decency of morality, grace in the soul, glory and beauty in the face, smoothness in the speech, nicety of the feelings, and all the other beauties in this world are the sparkles of the reflections of our love for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). How nicely Jalal al-Din Rumi says:

“Come O Soul! The real feast is to meet with Muhammad (pbuh); because, the brightness of the universe comes from the light of the beauty of his blessed existence.”

This is why following the exemplary life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is the essential means of attaining the contentment of Allah the Almighty. In other words, a believer cannot be a perfect human being (*Insan-i Kamil*) unless he/she makes progress in following the Sunnah of the Prophet in his/her worship and behaviors. He cannot, also, attain the true peace and happiness of Islam; because, Allah the Almighty displayed the model for “the perfect human being” in the personality of His Messenger (pbuh) and made him mercy for the universe and the exemplary personality for the believers.

Therefore, how should this obedience be, which is so important that Allah the Almighty specifies it as a condition for His love to His servants?

Of course this lofty state begins with loving the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) with heart and soul and getting shares from his spiritual world. In respect to following our only “exemplary personality,” Allah the Most High gives us the following measures:





“...So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. And fear Allah; for Allah is strict in Punishment.” (Hashr 59; 7)

“O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and make not vain your deeds!” (Muhammad 47; 33)

“All who obey Allah and the Messenger are in the Company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah, of the Prophets (who teach), the Sincere (lovers of Truth), the Witnesses (who testify), and the Righteous (who do good): ah! what a beautiful Fellowship!” (Nisa 4; 69)

Samples from the spiritual world of the Messenger of Allah are displayed in the Holy Qur'an, which is the Divine guide and edict for the believers. Of course the secrets of the Qur'an can only be understood in the extent of wrapping our hearts with the spirituality of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). If we become honored with entering into his spiritual world and reach the happiness of watching Divine beauties and manifestations of the commands, knowledge and wisdom like his companions' did, then our hearts will become like the hearts of the companions and we will begin to accept his every command and even implications saying: **“May my father and mother be sacrificed for you O messenger of Allah!”** Thus, we will reach the meaning of love, compassion and submission hidden in this sentence.

The honored existence of the Prophet (pbuh) is a source of love and blessings for the humanity. Gnostics know that the reason for existence is the love felt for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). This is why the entire universe is dedicated to the light of the existence Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh). The entire creation is created for his honor; he is such a personality that the Lord of the universe calls him, **“My friend.”**¹⁷

In the past, people used to engrave wise sayings and poetry on their grave stone. The great philanthropist **Bezm-i Alem Valide Sultan** has the following lines engraved on her grave stone:

From love, Muhammad came into existence

What would come out of love without Muhammad?

With his appearance, Bezm-i Alem joined (to her beloved)



Because, as it is expressed in the statement of *shahadah*,^{*18} Prophet Muhammad was a human being and servant of Allah, but in regards to his character and moral attributes he was also the Shah of the prophets. How elegantly Aziz Mahmud Hudayi expresses this point:

*This universe is a mirror; everything exists because of the Truth
Allah is always seen from the mirror of Muhammad*

Love for the Messenger of Allah is the most effective means to make a servant happy both in this world and in the Hereafter. In fact, because they were molded with his love, the companions' of the Prophet achieved such high levels of servitude. Because of their love for him, they loyally united around him and became the exemplary stars for future generations. Some of the companions were so scrupulous in following him that they would walk on the same roads where the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had walked; stopped where he had stopped; and smelled the roses which he had smelled. They did all these actions just to feel the pleasure of following him.

There are endless examples for the manifestation of the companions' love for the Prophet (pbuh).

Anas b. Malik narrates:

A man came to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and asked:

"When will be the Last Hour?"

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) replied:

"What preparation have you made for that?"

The man replied:

"The love of Allah and of His Messenger (that is my preparation for the Last Hour) (for the Day of Resurrection)." Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) said:

"You would be along with one whom you love."

Anas (r.a.) narrates the rest of the account as follows:

"Nothing pleased us more after accepting Islam than the words of Allah's Apostle: **"You would be along with one whom you love."** I love Allah and

18. * To Pronounce The Formula "I Testify That There Is No God But Allah, Muhammad Is The Servant Of Allah And His Messenger"





His Messenger and Abu Bakr and Umar, and I hope that I would be along with them even though I have not acted like them.” (Muslim, Birr, 163)

Of course every believer, who would like to have the honor to be with the Messenger of Allah in the Hereafter, must adorn his/her soul with love for the Prophet (pbuh) and his light.

Allah’s apostle (pbuh) points out the ardent love of his followers for him as follows:

Abu Huraira reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying: *“The people whom I loved most from amongst my Ummah would be those who would come after me but everyone amongst them would have the keenest desire to catch a glimpse of me even at the cost of his family and wealth.”* (Muslim, Jannah, 12)

“There would come some people after me and every one of them would have the keenest desire to catch a glimpse of me even at the cost of his family and wealth.” (Hakim, IV, 95)

As a matter of fact, when the Prophet (pbuh) passed away the companions were like melting candles from their sorrow . Their pain was so strong that they did not know what to do. Umar (r.a.) lost his temper for a moment; and Abu Bakr (r.a.) tried to calm the people down. They were sad because those, who could not stand being away from him even for a short time, were not going to be able to see him anymore. One of them was Abdullah b. Zayd (r.a.). He raised his hands and began to pray saying:

“Dear Lord! Please take my eye sight and make me blind. I do not want to see anything in this world after the Messenger of Allah...” and he became blind at that instant. (Qurṭubī, *Al-Jami’*, V, 271)

After the death of the Prophet (pbuh), whenever Abu Bakr (r.a.) remembered the Messenger of Allah and every time he wanted to narrate his sayings, he would begin to cry and have difficulty speaking. Abu Hurairah (r.a.) talks about his state as follows:

“One day Abu Bakr (r.a.) stepped up to the pulpit and said:

“As you know last year the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was standing in front of you right where I am standing right now” and began to cry. Then he repeated his words and cried again. He repeated his words a third time and again he could not help and cried.” (See Tirmidhi, Daawat, 105)



Even though Abu Bakr (r.a.) was always with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in his lifetime, he still missed him. After the Prophet's (pbuh) death his longing got worse. Aisha (r.a.) depicts her father's longing as follows:

"My father asked on his deathbed:

"What day is today?"

We said that it was Monday. The he told us:

"If I die today do not delay my burial till tomorrow; because the loveliest day for me is the one closest to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) (In other words the day that I will meet him)." (Ahmad b. Hanbal, I, 8)

Some of the companions who loved the Messenger of Allah and wanted to meet Allah and His Messenger as soon as possible envied the sick and dying people. For instance, Muhammad b. Munkadir (r.a.) visited Jabir (r.a.) at his final hours. When he realized that Jabir (r.a.) was very close to death, to appease his pain he told him:

"Tell my greetings to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)." (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 4)

Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) loved to listen to memories of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Bara' (r.a.) explains his father's desire to listen to memories of the Prophet as follows:

Abu Bakr came to my father, who was at home, and purchased a saddle from him. He said to my father: "Tell your son Bara' to take this saddle to my home." My father replied:

"No, I won't tell him until you tell me what happened to you on your night journey with Allah's Apostle (during Migration)." Thereupon, Abu Bakr (r.a.) told him everything about their migration journey." (Bukhari, Aṣḥab al-Nabi, 2; Ahmad b. Hanbal, I, 2)

The companions' respect, love, and esteem to the Prophet (pbuh) was so strong that some of them did not get a haircut because his hands touched their hair.

The following incident is a wonderful example that shows how the wives' of the companions (may Allah be pleased with them) inculcated the love for Allah's Messenger (pbuh) to their children.





Female companions reproached their children when they had not visited the Prophet (pbuh) for a while. Huzaifa's (r.a.) mother scolded him for not visiting the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) for a few days. Huzaifa (r.a.) narrates this incident as follows:

"My mother asked me

"When did you visit the Prophet (pbuh) last?" I told her:

"I have not seen him for a few days." She got very upset and reproached me very much. Then I told her:

"Please stop. I am going to see and pray the evening prayer with him right away. Then I will ask him to pray for our forgiveness..." (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 378; Ahmad b. Hanbal, V, 391-92)

Another exemplary incident, which illustrates how the companion's love for the Messenger of Allah surpassed all other mortal pains, is as follows:

Abdullah b. Mubarak narrates:

"I was with Imam Malik and he was narrating the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) to us. A scorpion came and stung him several times. His color was changing and he was not stopping in the middle of his narration. At the end of his class, after the people dispersed, I told him:

"O Abu Abdullah! There was something weird about you today."

And he said:

"Yes, I was stung by a scorpion several times and I endured all of them only because of my respect and esteem to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)." (Munawi, *Fayd al-Qadir*, III, 333; Suyuti, *Miftah al-Jannah*, p. 52)

Prophet's chief muadhdhin, Bilal al-Habashi (r.a.) had a very different state. After the Messenger of Allah had left this mortal world, Bilal (r.a.) went silent and he did not announce the prayer times anymore. Abu Bakr (r.a.) pleaded him several times to announce the prayer times just like he had done during the Prophet's lifetime. He told Abu Bakr and asked to be excused:

"O Abu Bakr! If you ask my opinion, I do not have the strength to call people to prayer after the death of the Prophet (pbuh). Please do not force me and leave me alone." However, Abu Bakr was longing for the adhans of the Prophet's time. And he insisted saying:



“After the loss of Messenger of Allah, should the Muslim ummah lose his muadhdhin, too?” Finally, one day Bilal (r.a.) could no longer stand his insistence and he went up to mosque’s minaret in order to call people for the dawn prayer. He began, but he could not finish it because of his memories of the time of the Prophet (pbuh). He went down the minaret. Abu Bakr (r.a.) did not insist anymore.

Bilal (r.a.) could no longer stay in Medina and migrated to Damascus the very same morning. He attended many battles with the hope of receiving the honor of martyrdom and meeting with the beloved Prophet (pbuh). However, each time he returned from the battles as a veteran. Years passed. Bilal (r.a.) even survived through a plague which took twenty five thousand lives,. He burned with the desire of joining the Prophet (pbuh) until the end of his life.

After the generation of the companions, the love and desire to meet with the Prophet, the Mercy of the worlds, continued for generations . Out of his love and respect to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) one of the leading Sufis, Sayyid Ahmad Yasawi, refused to live on earth after the age of 63, which was the age of the Prophet’s death. Until the end of his life Yasawi continued his life in a grave which he dug.

The great hadith scholar and mujtahid Imam Nawawi never ate a watermelon in his life, because he did not know how the Prophet (pbuh) had eaten watermelon. He stayed away from doing such a simple act as eating a watermelon because of the possibility of doing it differently than the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was such a personality that those who followed his steps became exceptional figures of human history like the stars in the sky and attained the eternal salvation and happiness. The companions, the friends’ of Allah, and righteous believers have gained their merits in the extent of their closeness to that Eternal Pride of the universe.

How much do we carry the same feelings and sensitivity of Abdullah b. Zayd, Imam Nawawi, Sayyid Ahmad Yasawi, and others like them? We should measure our love for the Prophet (pbuh) with the level of their love for him; and we should evaluate our servitude to Allah and how well we follow His Messenger (pbuh). Only then we can revive our souls according to their examples.





The states of the prominent figures from Islamic history are of course measures from those star-like personalities; however the real source of their exemplary characteristics comes from their love, respect, and loyalty to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

As we know, love is like an electric line between two hearts. In order to be a good Muslim, it is necessary to achieve this ability in the heart. The crises of contemporary societies are the result of losing this ability. This is why among the wheels of selfish modern culture many values are being lost. Since in modern society all orientations are based on worldly and selfish concerns, people are not able to find solutions for their spiritual hunger. Ascending the hearts from a metaphorical love to a true love, for instance Majnun's journey from Laila's love to the Divine love, can be achieved by maturing the heart with proper practices. Today humanity needs this kind of love. All types of crimes, evil, and immaturities are the result of lacking the Divine love.

The greatness of true love is measured by taking risks and doing sacrifices for the sake of the beloved. Those who are in love may give their lives and may not even feel that they are making self-sacrifices. They feel like that they are paying their debt; however, those who do not know the true love and those who do not have their share from love are the ones who can not find the path to maturity and waste their lives and spirituality under the control of their inner self.

Accepting the burden of the trust, which was not accepted by the mountains, is actually a Divine privilege given to humanity. And the requirement for attaining this privilege is to reach the true love; because, this fight and conflict in the human soul can only be solved with the help of the true love. A perfect human being emancipates himself/herself from animal inclinations and makes his/her soul a garden from the gardens of Paradise, from where he/she can watch Divine manifestations.

Our Lord says in the Holy Qur'an **"...breathed into him of my spirit,..."** (Hijr 15; 29) and reminds human beings the Divine essence He gave them. If this lofty essence takes the believer to perfection as a result of love and compassion, then heart begins to make progress towards the secrets of the divine world. Then the secrets of the divine world, the reality of the objects, and the secrets called human and universe reveal themselves. The servant becomes honored with the manifestations of a pure heart.



When the servant reaches this level of maturity, the veils between the servant and Allah begin to be lifted. He/she also begins to understand the secret of **“death before the time of death.”** The love for the world and its mortal pleasures and the value of its temporary and polished beauties move out of his/her heart. Thus the soul attains the inexpressible pleasure of getting close to its Creator.

Those who have not tasted the true love cannot break the chains of their animal inclinations, which exist naturally in their souls, and step into the world of angels. The heart of those who do not know how to love is like an uncultivated earth. Being able to love is the merit; because love is the reason for the creation.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is the essence and reason for the existence of the universe. He is an eminent blessing of Allah the Almighty. He is the guide between the servant and Allah the Almighty. With his indescribable acts and behaviors until he departed from this world, he displayed for us the most supreme example of being a servant to Allah the Almighty. In short he is the mercy and love which embraces the worlds. The loving souls, which submit themselves to him, will always be burning with his love and longing for the day they will meet him.

It is this kind of love which makes the great men be the great men, such as the famous Sufis Yunus Emre and Jalal al-Din Rumi. Rumi stepped into the eternal and true happiness by means of such love; however very few people know when, where, and with whom his happiness began. Only those who have become like him through love know its secrets. Rumi's happiness was to meet with the Lord of the universe. The following lines of Rumi explain the source of his happiness:

“As long as I have my soul, I will be a servant of the Qur'an. I am the earth under the feet of Muhammad (pbuh). If someone narrates anything other than this as my words, I get hurt from him/her and his/her words.”

Following the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) with Love

The result of the true love for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is to make the dust of his path as the crown on our heads and to submit ourselves to him; because he (pbuh) is such a personality that he is the pure mercy for human-





ity. In this regard, the following verse beautifully expresses his mercy to his followers:

“Now has come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that you should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful.” (Tawbah 9; 128)

In this respect, the Messenger of Allah was so sensitive and merciful that when he saw people heedlessly heading into destruction, he would become very sad. This is stated in the following verse:

“We have not revealed unto you (Muhammad) this Qur’an that you should be distressed...” (Ta-ha 20; 2)

In return for the Prophet’s endless mercy, compassion, and love for his followers, as his followers we should contemplate how we act and behave in our lives. In fact the measure of our love for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is to accept him and the Qur’an as our guides; and to try to be like him in every aspect of our lives. How did the companions, who loved him and who sacrificed everything they had for him, feel about him? Compared to them, where do we stand? We should measure our actions and behaviors with theirs, and we need to adorn ourselves with these measures. Our sins, mistakes, deficiencies, and disobediences should be cleansed with his pure moral principles; and we should live a spiritual revival by the example and wisdom of his blessed life.

The secret of meeting with Allah the Almighty lies in getting sincerely closer to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger and his high morals and behaviors. This can be achieved by loving what Allah and His Messenger love and hating what they hate.

Divine love keeps the heart alive and directs it to goodness. Love and its opposite, hate, cannot be united in the same heart at the same time; however, because the heart does not accept emptiness, the absence of one means the existence of the other. The difference between these two opposites is as endless as the distance between the highest level of Paradise and the deepest pit of Hell.

With the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), humanity got the most perfect guide, whom they were waiting for. For this reason, to this today those who still live selfish lives are more responsible than the people who once lived ignorant lives before the emergence of the Prophet (pbuh). In this



respect, more than any other time, we need the help of the Prophet's (pbuh) exemplary character in order to train strong characters, because in the contemporary age people yield to power and live under the control of their inner self. The greatest reason for having magnificent periods in our history is because in those periods righteous friends of Allah, who displayed exemplary personalities as the heirs of the Prophet, (pbuh) existed. Whereas now, if we examine our situation, we can see that one of the saddest realities of our time is that we live in a spiritual corruption from the lack of such exemplary characters.

In order to reach the Prophet's (pbuh) spirituality and the spirituality of those heroes who sincerely followed him in our history, we need to have such monumental and exemplary people. And in order to achieve this goal, we have to understand them and their spiritual world. In other words, we need to know how they saw the mortal world, and how they employed their intellect, lives, and possessions in order to open humanity to the path of happiness.

With the help of the book titled "An Excellent Exemplar (*uswatun hasanah*)" written by Prof. Dr. Ömer Çelik, Assistant Prof. Mustafa Öztürk, Dr. Murat Kaya and other academicians who helped them we should contemplate over our lives and measure how much they fit to the principles of the life of our Prophet (pbuh). In order to be blessed with the intercession of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), we need to live our lives according to his principles. We need to reflect the beauty and depth of these principles in our worship, thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and in our present and future lives; in this world and afterlife; this is true due to the fact that people imitate and follow those whom they love in the extent of their love. In order to imitate and properly follow the Messenger of Allah, we need to learn and examine his exemplary character.

No matter how fertile a field is, it cannot produce crops without the help of rain, sun, and wind. Similarly, richness of a heart depends on submission to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh); for he was the most superior of people who were in this world and who will come to this world. He was the source of the merits, blessings, and entire mercy and compassion in this universe.

I believe this book, which presents standards about worship, transaction, ethics, and humanly behavior from the life of the Messenger of Allah, will be "a practical measure" for us to question ourselves and see the distance between the actions of the Prophet (pbuh) and ours.





May Allah the Almighty help us benefit from the exemplary character of our guide for eternal happiness, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). May He bless us with the beauties of this world and the Hereafter. May He be content with all those who learn and teach the exemplary personality of the Prophet (pbuh) and live in accordance with what they learn. May He make the effort of those who have written this book as continuous charity.

Amin ...



FOREWORD

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مُنْشِئِ الْخَلْقِ مِنْ عَدَمٍ
ثُمَّ الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى الْمُخْتَارِ فِي الْقَدَمِ¹⁹

Endless praises are due to Allah the Almighty, Who has blessed us with the honor of being humans and being His servants among His countless creation, Who sent Muhammad Mustafa, the Eternal Pride of the universe, to His servants as the guide for the straight path, and Who has blessed us with the honor of being among the followers of His Messenger (pbuh) and Who has bestowed upon us the exemplary personality of His Messenger.

He is Allah, Who filled the hearts of the believers with the flowers of wisdom and knowledge. He quenched the thirst of humanity with His Holy Book Qur'an and brought peace into their hearts by sending His Messenger Muhammad Mustafa.

Dear Lord! Even if You had given us endless life, and we had devoted all of it to thank and praise You, we would not have praised You enough. You are just like You praised Yourself. We are incapable to be thankful enough even for Your smallest blessing. How would it be possible to be thankful enough for Your blessings? Moreover, being able to offer our gratitude to You, is Your blessing which requires gratitude. O Lord! We are aware of our weaknesses and we verily absolve You from all deficiencies.

Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad Mustafa, who is the loftiest example of the Divine training, who was chosen by Allah the Almighty to convey His message to humanity and devoted himself to the salvation of humanity. He, who taught and continues to teach people their Lord's love and knowledge, who is the blessed guide of the path which goes to Paradise and Allah the Most High, and who is the happiness of the souls.

19. All Praises Are Due To Allah, Who Is The Creator Of The Creation From Nothingness; Then The Blessings Be Upon The Chosen One.





Glowing light of the universe! Our generous master! Peace be upon you...

The one who reached the highest station which a created being can possibly reach! Peace be upon you...

The one for whose honor the Divine treasure of favor is opened before those who are in the darkness of ignorance! Peace be upon you...

O honorable Prophet! Your lights and spirituality is the potion for our eyes and souls. What would be the meaning of our world, if there was no hope to meet you in the Hereafter? Peace be upon you ...

You are the capital of our soul, and we love neither this world nor the Hereafter without you. Peace be upon you ...

The most superior creation! We cannot send enough blessings to properly honor you. Hundreds of thousands of peace and blessings, for each moment of Allah the Almighty, be upon you ...

We send our greetings to the companions, who completely reported all the actions and sayings of the Prophet to us, and to the scholars, the saints, the martyrs and the righteous servants of Allah, who followed the examples of the companions; we expect their intercession in the Hereafter. May Allah be pleased with them all!

In order to achieve perfection and reach the straight path, people are in need of guides and missionaries, whose souls are pure and whose hearts are clean from the blemishes of sins and suspicion, because imitation and examples are the natural characteristics of human beings. Also, examples are more effective than the words. Humans are more fascinated by actual examples than abstract thoughts and ideas. This is necessary not just to help in the learning process, but also to persuade the listener. In fact, some lessons in the Qur'an are presented by stories and examples from the past, which makes the message more tangible for the readers.

If the need in human nature for exemplary characters is not filled with true guides and excellent exemplars, then it will certainly be filled with fake ones; because, as it is expressed in an old saying, "nature does not like the gaps." Humans, especially when they are maturing and spiritually developing adolescences, look for exemplary characters to imitate and sometimes they may pursue mischief-makers as guides of the straight path. They may



devote their souls to the wrong places and become disappointed. Those who cannot find the right guides, which lead them to goodness, follow the wrong examples shown to them. In fact, when we compare today's lifestyle with the lifestyle required by Allah the Almighty we see a huge gap between them; because, people in the modern age usually look for examples among the dishonest and worthless instead of looking for them in the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). It is very important to correct this mistake and to fill the above-mentioned gap; for Allah the Almighty states in the Qur'an: **"(Remember) the day when We will call every people with their Imam..."** (Al-Isra 17; 71) and tells His servants that they will enter either Paradise or Hell together with their leaders. Therefore, one should choose the right guides in this world and be among the righteous.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) assembled all the distinguishing characteristics of the previous Prophets in Himself. He is the apex of all the Prophets and he is the glad tidings given by them; he is an honored and great prophet sent as mercy for the universe. The Prophets made a solemn promise to Allah the Almighty that they were going to help the Messenger (pbuh), whom they were waiting for a long time. This is expressed in the following verse:

"Behold! Allah took the covenant of the Prophets, saying: "I give you a Book and Wisdom; then comes to you a Messenger, confirming what is with you; do you believe in him and render him help." Allah said: "Do you agree, and take this my Covenant as binding on you?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses." (Al-i Imran 3; 81)

The Prophets (peace be upon them) kept their promises, and they declared their faith in our Prophet (pbuh). They strongly desired to be among his followers and they gave the glad tidings of his arrival in every chance they had. All kinds of goodness, righteousness, justice, mercy, and good manners on this world undoubtedly emerged from the message of these Prophets. They had been sent to humanity to show the straight path. If they had not been sent, there would not have been any order in this world; life would have been unbearable; anarchy would have spread all over the world and people would have drowned in the whirls of mischief. There would be no logical basis for the creation.





Our Prophet (pbuh) is the final prophet. All distinguishing attributes of the Prophets were manifested in him. He is a unique and beautiful exhibition in which all kinds of moral excellence are displayed. Our Lord created the universe for the sake of the Prophet (pbuh) and made him the dearest of all creation. Beautiful roses, favors, and rich fiestas bestowed upon us by the Absolute Divine Power are all for the sake of him.

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) lived like a common member of his society. He experienced all the levels of the society from being an orphan to being the head of the state. He was always with the people. This situation prepared the natural ground for him to be an excellent example in every detail of life. Our Prophet's leadership in social and political fields often leads those who think that the prophetic guidance was only about spiritual matters to disbelief in his prophethood. However, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is a perfect guide for humanity not only in the spiritual life, but also in the material and social life.

Selection of the Prophets from human beings instead of angels is certainly based on wisdom. Otherwise, people might object saying that "we are not angels and we cannot be like them." This is why the Prophet (pbuh), who is our only exemplary character to reach perfection, became an exemplary guide for affairs in both this world and in the afterlife.

As a prophet, a missionary, a statesman, a leader, a commander, a judge, a teacher, a tradesman, a father, and a friend, all the acts and sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) were recorded in details in thousands of volumes.

Our most important duty, as Muslims, is to learn our Prophet's (pbuh) exemplary life in the best manner and to teach about him to future generations. Moreover, we need books presenting his exemplary life that are appropriate for the needs of a time and place. In this regard, no matter how many books are written about the Prophet (pbuh) and no matter how much we introduce our Prophet to humanity, this book cannot be considered much.

We, as the authors of this humble book, have wanted to add a value and meaning to our lives by writing about our Blessed Prophet (pbuh). Even though we are not worthy enough, we took it upon ourselves to write this book.

We pray that our Lord blesses our hearts with love for Him and knowledge of Him, and love for His Messenger (pbuh). We ask Him to make this humble effort a continuous charity for us and for all those who made a contri-



bution. We pray our Lord to bless us all with the intercession of our Prophet (pbuh) and with the honor to be neighbors to our beloved Prophet (pbuh) in the Hereafter.

Amin...

And the success is from Allah the Almighty

Küçük Çamlıca / 30. 04. 2003

Prof. Dr. Ömer ÇELİK
Assistant Prof. Mustafa ÖZTÜRK
Dr. Murat KAYA





CHAPTER ONE

HIS EXEMPLARY CHARACTER IN SERVITUDE TO ALLAH

- I. PROPHET'S RESPECT, REVERENCE, LOVE
AND SUBMISSION TO ALLAH THE MOST
HIGH
- II. PROPHET'S COMPLIANCE TO DIVINE
MEASURES
- III. PROPHET'S LIFE OF WORSHIP
- IV. PROPHET'S ASCETIC LIFE STYLE





“And serve thy Lord until there come unto thee the Hour that is Certain. ”
(Al-Hijr 15; 72)

HIS EXEMPLARY CHARACTER IN SERVITUDE TO ALLAH

*“If I interpreted the exemplary behaviors
and good attributes of the Sultan of the
Prophets, it would pass hundreds of judgment
days but my interpretation would not end.”*

Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.)

Servitude is the highest point of modesty and submission to Allah. To yield to Allah the Most High with utmost submission means to follow His commands and prohibitions fastidiously and to abstain from disobedience to Him. Servitude is the reason for the creation of human beings. Servitude can only be done to Allah the Almighty, who is the Real Owner of the blessings and who gives people their lives to enjoy His blessings.

Being a servant to Allah means to declare one's freedom from everything other than Him. From this point of view, servitude is not something that makes someone a slave or limits their abilities; on the contrary, it makes humans superior to the rest of the other creations. As it was stated by Shah Naqshiband (q.s.) “being a believer means adhering to Divine rules, living piously, observing the strict rules and staying away from concessions as much as possible, complete enlightenment, purity, and mercy.”

There is an internal and an external side of being a servant. The external side is *‘abdiyyah*, which means to refrain from heedlessness when praying, refrain from backbiting when fasting, refrain from ungratefulness when giving in charity and to refrain from hypocrisy when performing the pilgrimage. In addition, it means to strive for the sake of Allah, remember Him constantly, and perform other pious acts free from spiritual diseases.

On the other hand, its inner aspect is *‘ubdiyyah*, which means to be content and free from enmity, to be patient and not complain, be certain and free



of doubts, to exist without becoming lost in the material world, and to seek incessant unity.

Allah the Almighty states the object of creation of human beings as the servitude to Him in the following verse:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me.” (al-Zariyat 51; 56); because, a servant may attain the contentment of Allah and the bliss of seeing Him in the Hereafter. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) says that:

The essence of human is insight (basirah) and the rest is skin

And insight is the Face of the Friend.

Prophets are the best examples in this respect. Allah the Most High, from time to time, uses the expression **“...Ni'ma al-'abd - How excellent a slave!...”** (Sad 38; 30) for them. And Muhammad (pbuh) was the most perfect one among them. He lived such a life of servitude that Allah the Almighty praised his life in the following verse: **“La 'amruka - Verily, by thy life (O Prophet) ...”** In the declaration of faith (*Kalimah al-Shahadah*), the Prophet's servitude is mentioned before his prophethood, which shows how lofty and honorable being a servant is. For this reason, Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II used to pray saying: “May my Lord not deprive me of His servitude...”

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is an excellent exemplar (*uswatun hasanah*) for us in every aspect of servitude, especially in prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, charity, remembrance of Allah and supplication. Since the essence of all worship is revering and loving Allah the Almighty, first we need to see Prophet's exemplariness in this regard.



I. PROPHET'S RESPECT, REVERENCE, LOVE AND SUBMISSION TO ALLAH THE MOST HIGH

Those who won won because of their reverence; and those who lost lost because they abandoned reverence.

1. His Reverence

Reverence means to esteem a being in the heart, to elevate his/her honor, and to hold his/her commands above all the other commands. Reverence to Allah the Almighty, on the other hand, means to reserve the highest level of such feelings for Him.

The essence of Islam, which is the prescription for the salvation of humanity, is:

Ta'zim li amrillah: Reverence to Allah the Almighty and His commands, in other words willingly submission to Him;

Shafqat li Khalqillah: Serving the creation of Allah with compassion and mercy.

The Prophet's (pbuh) reverence to Allah the Almighty was so high that he held his contentment for Him above everything else. The Prophet's greatest fear was to do something which would attract His anger and lose His love. We can see the most remarkable example of this in his journey back from the city of Taif. While his arms and legs were covered with blood, he prayed as follows:

"Dear Lord! If are not angry at me, I would not care the troubles and difficulties that I am in. Your blessings and kindness is greater for me. Dear Lord! I seek refuge in Your Face from Your Anger and from being deprived from Your contentment... Dear Lord! I ask Your forgiveness till You are content with me. O Lord! All power and all might comes from You..." (Ibn Hisham, II, 30)



The Prophet's reverence was to lose himself, like how the stars disappear when the sun rises. Only Allah with all His Might is manifested in the enlightened existence of the Prophet (pbuh). Pointing out this reality, Jalal al-Din Rumi says that:

"What is (the meaning of) of exalting and glorifying Allah? To deem yourself despicable and (worthless) as dust. What is (the meaning of) knowledge of Allah's unity? To consume yourself in the presence of the One. If you wish to shine like day, burn up your night-like self-existence." (Mathnawi, I, verses: 3008-10)

The Prophet's reverence to Allah the Almighty is clearly seen in his efforts to follow the orders of Allah. In fact it is stated in the following verses:

"And those who, when they are reminded of the revelations of their Lord, fall not deaf and blind thereat." (al-Furqan 25; 73)

"...when it (Qur'an) is recited unto them, fall down prostrate on their faces, adoring" (al-Isra 17; 107)

In this regard, Ḥabbab (r.a.) narrates the following exemplary incident:

"Akra' b. Habis and Uyaynah b. Ḥiṣn came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). They saw him sitting with poor and helpless companions like Bilal, Suhayb, Ammar, and Ḥabbab. They belittled these poor companions and told the Prophet (pbuh):

"We would like you to arrange a separate meeting for us. Thus, Arabs will know that we are superior to these men. As you know, delegates and groups from Arab tribes come to us. We are ashamed to be seen together with these slaves. Therefore, when we come, let them go. After our meeting, you may still see them." The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: *"Okay"* then they told him:

"It is not enough to say okay. We would like you to write it down for us." Upon this Prophet (pbuh) called Ali (r.a.) and asked for a piece of paper to write their agreement down. We were sitting in a corner. Just then Gabriel came and brought the following verse **"And do not drive away those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, they desire only His favor; neither are you answerable for any reckoning of theirs, nor are they answerable for any reckoning of yours, so that you should drive**



them away and thus be of the unjust.” (al-An’am 6; 52) Then He brought the next verse:

“And thus do We try some of them by others so that they say: Are these they upon whom Allah has conferred benefit from among us? Does not Allah best know the grateful?” (al-An’am 6; 53) after that the next verse was revealed:

“And when those who believe in Our revelations come unto thee, say: Peace be unto you! Your Lord has prescribed for Himself mercy...” (al-An’am 6; 54)

The Messenger of Allah, mercy of the worlds, placed the paper down and immediately called us. When we came, he said, **“Greetings to you, your Lord adopted mercy and beneficence as His attributes.”** We came closer to him. We were so close to him that our knees were touching his knees. After the revelation of these verses, we continued to sit with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh); but, when he wanted to leave, he would leave. When the following verse was revealed:

“And withhold yourself with those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His goodwill, and let not your eyes pass from them, desiring the beauties of this world’s life; ...” (al-Kahf 18; 28), he stopped doing that and after that we began to be more careful. When we were together, we began to leave before it was too late.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 7; Tabari, *Tafsir*, VII, 262-263).

According to Wahidi’s report, when the last verse was revealed, the Prophet (pbuh) stood up and began to look for the poor companions. He found them behind the mosque repeating the names of Allah (making *dhikr*). Upon this, he said:

“All praises are due to Allah, who did not take my life before giving me an order to be patient about being with these people. All praises are due to Allah! From now on my life and death will be with you.” (Asbab al-Nuzul, p. 304)

Abu Bakr’s daughter Aisha (may Allah be pleased with them) narrates the following incident about her father, who was known for his submission and obedience to Allah and His Messenger (pbuh):





“When Allah the Most High revealed the verses about my innocence²⁰, my father who used to disburse money to Mistah bin Uthatha because of his relationship to him and his poverty, said, ‘By Allah, I will never give anything to Mistah bin Uthatha after what he has said about Aisha.’ Then Allah revealed:

“And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you swear not to give to the near of kin and to the needy, and to fugitives for the cause of Allah. Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn you not that Allah may forgive you? Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (al-Nur 24; 22)

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq said, ‘Yes, by Allah, I would like that Allah forgive me.’ and continued to give Mistah the money he used to give him before. He also added, “By Allah, I will never deprive him of it at all.” (Bukhari, Maghazi, 34; Muslim, Tawbah, 56)

This kind of feeling of reverence existed in all companions’ of the Prophet (pbuh). The best manifestation of this can be seen at the time of the prohibition of alcoholic drinks. The prohibition of alcoholic drinks was finalized with the revelation of the 90th and 91st verses of the fifth chapter of the Qur’an. When the Prophet (pbuh) recited the last part of the verse **“Will you then desist?”** (al-Maidah 5; 91), Umar (r.a.) immediately said:

“O Lord! Yes, we desist.” Not just Umar but all believers, who happened to be there, said “Yes, dear Lord, we will abstain from alcohol and gambling from now on.” Then, upon the order of the Messenger of Allah a public crier announced the prohibition of alcoholic drinks. Upon hearing this announcement, all the believers emptied their stocks of wine into the streets, and the streets of Medina became flooded with alcoholic drinks. (Ibn Ḥanbal, I, 53; II, 351; Nasai, Ashribah, 1-2; Ḥakim, II, 305)

The Prophet’s (pbuh) reverence to Allah the Almighty led him to be very sensitive about His Oneness and Greatness. He (pbuh) spent all his life abstaining from everything which was against the principle of *tawhid* (the unity of Allah), and he adopted the following Divine commands:

20. Hypocrites slandered about chastity of the mother of believers Aisha (r.anha) because of an incident occurred during the expedition of Bani Mustaliq. Allah the Almighty revealed the verse stating that she is innocent and chaste. (Al-Nur 24; 26)



“Lo! Allah forgives not that a partner should be ascribed unto Him. He forgives (all) and saves that to whom He will. Whoso ascribes partners to Allah, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin.” (al-Nisa 4; 48)

“And verily it has been revealed unto you as unto those before you (saying): If you ascribe a partner to Allah your work will fail and you indeed will be among the losers. Nay, but worship Allah, and be of those who give thanks.” (al-Zumar 39; 65-66)

In this respect, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) never tolerated negligence and he always intervened in the tiniest acts which might be associated with attributing partners to Allah the Almighty.

Zayd b. Khalid al-Juhani narrates that:

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) led us in the morning prayer at al-Hudaybiyah after rain had fallen during the night. When he finished, he turned around to the congregation and said:

“*Do you know what your Lord says?*” Companions replied, “Allah and His Messenger know best.” Then he (pbuh) said:

“[Allah says]: This morning some of My servants became believers and some of them became disbelievers. Those who said ‘We have been given rain by the grace and mercy of Allah,’ believe in Me and disbelieve in the stars; those who said ‘We have been given rain by the dawn and setting of such-and-such star,’ disbelieve in Me and believe in the stars.’” (Bukhari, Adhan, 156)

Another tradition related to this issue is as follows:

There was a solar eclipse on the day that the Prophet’s (pbuh) son, Abraham, passed away. People began to say that the eclipse happened because of death of the Prophet’s son. Upon hearing this, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“The sun and the moon do not eclipse because of the death of someone from the people but they are two signs amongst the signs of Allah; when you see the eclipse stand up and pray.” (Bukhari, Kusuf (Eclipses), 15)

In the former one of these two incidents, the Prophet (pbuh) points out that attributing partners to Allah in any of His actions means disbelief and that Allah the Almighty is the Absolute Actor. In the latter one, on the other hand, he (pbuh) states that, compared to the Greatness of Allah the Almighty, people,





even the son of the Prophet, have no value other than servitude to Him; therefore, respect must be shown to Him only.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) closely watched his companions, who were still trying to recover from the age of ignorance and polytheism. He paid the utmost attention to keep them away from falling into false beliefs. The following incident is an example in this respect:

Abu Waqid al-Laythee: “We went out with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) on the campaign to Hunain. The pagans had a tree called *Dhat Anwat* where they would remain and hang their arms upon it. When we passed by it we said “O Messenger of Allah, won’t you make for us a *Dhat Anwat* just like theirs? The Messenger of Allah became really sad and told us “Allahu Akbar! You have said exactly as the sons of Israel have said to Moses, “**...O Moses! Make for us a god as they have (their) gods...**” (al-’Araf 7; 138). By the One Whose Hand my soul is in, verily these are the ways of the earlier nations.” (Tirmidhi, Fitan, 18)

Umar (r.a.) ordered that the *Samura* tree in Hudaibiyah, under which the *ridwan* pledge was sworn, be cut down for the same worry as the Prophet (pbuh). (Ibn Sa’d, II, 100)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was also sensitive about the attributes and names of Allah the Almighty to Him only. He would not let the smallest bit of polytheism suspicion exist. According to the narration of Ibn Abbas (r.a.), a man came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah! As you willed and as Allah willed. (He mentioned the Prophet’s name along with Allah about the issue of the Divine Will).” The Prophet (pbuh) refused to be mentioned along with Allah in regards to the Divine Will and said:

“*You made me equal to Allah, you should have said “what Allah willed.”*” (Ibn Hanbal, I, 283) Even though he was a prophet, he stated that the Absolute Will is the Will of Allah.

Another remarkable example is the following:

‘Adi b. Hatim reported that a person recited a sermon before the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) and said:



“He who obeys Allah and His Apostle, is on the straight path, and he who disobeys both of them, certainly goes astray.”

Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“What a bad speaker you are; (Instead of saying both of them) say: He who disobeys Allah and His Apostle.” (Muslim, Jum’a, 48)

Here, the Prophet (pbuh) warned the speaker for using the pronoun “هما,” which means both of you, because the idea that Allah and the Prophet are at the same level may be considered. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) reminded the speaker that he is also a servant of Allah and it is not appropriate for reverence to mention his name together with the name of Allah the Almighty.

Because of his reverence and love for Allah, the Prophet (pbuh) fought hard with idols and idol worship, which were obstacles on the path to Allah. He did not treat them favorably, he always hated them even before he became a prophet. As it was narrated by Jabir b. Abdullah, the Prophet (pbuh) ordered Umar ibn al-Khattab (r.a.) at the time of the conquest of Mecca to go to the Ka’bah and obliterate all idols in it. The Prophet (pbuh) did not enter it until they were all destroyed. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 48)

Prophet’s Reverence and love for Allah manifests itself in his continuous remembrance of Allah. He was ordered to, in the Qur’an, by the Lord of the worlds:

“And remember your Lord within yourself humbly and fearing and in a voice not loud in the morning and the evening and be not of the heedless ones.” (al-’Araf 7; 205)

In addition, he remembered Allah, as it was reported by Aisha (r.a.), at all moments of his life. (Muslim, Hayd, 117)

To revere *sha’air* or the signs of Allah is another way to show reverence to Him. This is stated in the following verse:

وَمَنْ يُعْظِمِ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ

“...Whoever holds in honor The Symbols of Allah, Such (honor) should come truly from piety of the hearts.” (al-Hajj 22; 32)





Islam is based upon showing respect to *Sha'airullah*. The word *sha'air* is the plural form of the word, *shi'ar*, which comes from the infinitive *shu'ur* meaning, to feel. Symbols, such as the Holy Qur'an, Ka'bah, call to the prayer, prayer, sacrifice, Safa and Marwa, which inspire feelings that remind us of Allah are called *sha'air*. In order to make people understand these abstract ideas more easily, Allah the Most High explains them through tangible symbols. These are the symbols which are used in worshiping Allah the Almighty and which can be felt by our senses. This is why the reverence shown to them is considered as reverence to Allah and being disrespectful to them means disrespect to Allah the Almighty.

The Holy Qur'an, one of these symbols, is the Divine ordinance which was revealed by Allah to the Prophet's (pbuh) pure heart. Therefore, respect shown to the Qur'an means respect to its Revealer, Allah the Almighty. People can reach Allah the Almighty by following the Prophets' footsteps, which is achieved by showing respect to the books revealed to them and reading and living in accordance with the rules and regulations in these holy books.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) became very attentive when he received revelations. In the early days of his prophethood, the Prophet (pbuh) would repeat the revelation to prevent from forgetting it. This is why the following verses were revealed to him:

“Do not move your tongue with it to make haste with it; it is for Us to collect it and to promulgate it: Therefore when We have recited it, follow its recitation.” (Qiyamah 75; 16-18)

Another manifestation of the Prophet's love and reverence to Allah the Almighty is his love for the Holy Qur'an. He used to shed tears while he recited and listened to the words of Allah; because, a lover listens very carefully to what their beloved says and there is nothing more delightful than the words of the beloved. Often a lover feels like they are with their beloved when they repeat the words of the beloved. The following narration of Ibn Mas'ud is a nice example for this reality: One day, Ibn Mas'ud recited parts from the Qur'an to the Prophet (pbuh) upon his request. When Ibn Mas'ud recited the following verse from chapter-An-Nisa' (The Women):

“But how (will it be with them) when We bring of every people a witness, and We bring you (O Muhammad) a witness against these?” (Nisa 4; 41) The Prophet (pbuh) said, *“Enough for now,”* When Ibn Mas'ud (r.a.)



looked at the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he saw that his eyes were overflowing with tears because of the Greatness of Allah. (Bukhari, Faḍa'il al-Qur'an, 32; Muslim, Musafirun, 247)

Because of the feelings of reverence and respect, it was quite often that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) cried when reciting or listening to the Qur'an. Companions, who closely followed the examples of the Prophet (pbuh) in every aspect of their lives, also revered the word of Allah. Every morning when Umar and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with them) woke up, they routinely kissed the Book of Allah. According to reports, every morning Ibn Umar (r.a.) would take the book of Allah, kiss it and say "this is my Lord's covenant and clear ordinance." (Kattani, II, 196-7) Ikrimah (r.a.) used to take it, rub it to his face and cry saying "my Lord's words! My Lord's book!" Thus, he expressed his reverence and respect for Allah the Almighty. (Ḥakim, III, 272)²¹

Before the revelation of the Qur'an, seven chosen poems, called *mu'al-laqat al-sab'* had hung on the Ka'bah's wall. People read them and talked about their rhetoric and eloquence. One of those poems belonged to Labid b. Rabi'a. Labid's poem stayed hung on the Ka'bah for years. When Labid was honored with the light of Islam, he never wrote another poem again. His final lines were as follows:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ إِذْ لَمْ يَأْتِنِي أَجْلِي حَتَّى لَبِسْتُ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ سِرْبَالًا

All praises are due to Allah, because before my time came
I, too, put on Islam's enlightening dress (Ibn 'Abdilbarr, *al-Isti'ab*, III, 1335)

The Ka'bah is another symbol of Allah, and showing respect to it is considered a requirement for reverence to Allah the Possessor of Majesty. The Ka'bah, as a manifestation of Allah's Mercy, is a sacred place of worship to which believers face while in prayer and circumambulation. By doing these they try to get closer to Allah the Almighty. Allah invites His servants to visit

21. Companions and our righteous predecessors showed great respect and reverence to the Book of Allah. They used to wash to erase the writings in ink. Anas (r.a.) narrates that during the caliphates of Umar, Uthman and Ali (may Allah be pleased with them all), people did not randomly throw the water, with which they erased the Qur'an. They saved it in cups and then poured it either next to a grave or into a clean well. There are also reports that people sometimes used this water for the purposes of medicine. (Kattani, II, 200)





and show respect to His house. Requirements of being respectful to it include having ritual purity while circumambulating and not turning the front or back of the body towards the Ka'bah when relieving oneself. This is why our predecessors were careful about the direction of the toilets in their houses during their construction.

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) was very sensitive about these issues. Abu Huraira reported that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saw some sputum in the direction of the Qibla of the mosque. He turned towards the people and said:

“How is it that someone amongst you stands before his Lord and then spits out in front of Him? Does any one of you like that he should be made to stand in front of someone and then spit at his face?... (Muslim, Masjid, 53)

Junaid al-Baghdadi (q.s.) visited someone, who was known as a pious believer, and saw that he spat in the direction of Qiblah. Junaid (q.s.) left before meeting the man thinking that “he was not following Prophet’s tradition.”

We should not infer from the above mentioned statements that spitting around is something approvable. Spitting around is reprehensible, but it is more reprehensible if it is done in the direction of Qiblah.

Prayer is another symbol of Allah. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who was more attentive to prayer than anyone else, commanded believers to be reverent with their prayers saying *“Whenever anyone of you is in prayer, surely Allah is in front of him.”* (Bukhari, Kitab al-Adab, 75)

In regards to *adhan*, or call for prayer, it is a significant symbol of our religion. By means of *adhans* the pillars of Islam are reminded to believers five times a day. As it is expressed by the poet Hakani:

*“Adhans are like the drums of Islam brought by the Sultan of the worlds. Heavens get shaken everyday by their ruble.”*²² Even though there are not many words in the call for prayer, it includes everything related to faith. The Prophet (pbuh) would have someone recite the *adhan* for every prayer time, and ask that everyone listen to its words and repeat them after the *muadhdhin*. He also asked his followers to say special supplication after listening it. He (pbuh) showed respect to it and asked his followers to do the same. (Muslim, Salat, 12; Abu Dawud, Salat, 36)

22. “Kûs-i Şer’inden O Şâh’ın Seheri
Güm Güm Öttü Feleğin Kubbeleri”



As it is stated in the following verse, **“And (as for) the camels, We have made them among the signs of Allah for you...”** (al-Hajj 22; 36), sacrificial animals are also accepted among the symbols of Allah. This is why believers are required to be respectful towards the notion of sacrifice and sacrificial animals. As in other types of worship, reverence and piety are the essence of sacrifice in Islam. Allah the Almighty states in the following verse:

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ تَتَقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ

“Their flesh and their blood reach not Allah, but the devotion from you reaches Him...” (al-Hajj 22; 37)

The following incident is a nice example for Prophet’s (pbuh) reverence towards Allah the Almighty through sacrifice:

In Hudaibiah, among the sacrificial animals there was a camel with a silver ring on its nose, which used to belong to Abu Jahl and had been taken as war booty in the Battle of Badr. When it was grazing with other animals, it ran away and went to Abu Jahl’s house in Mecca. Amr b. Anamah (r.a.) went to catch the camel. Some people did not want to return it to Amr. Instead they offered a hundred camels in place of it. When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) heard their offer, he said:

“If we did not determine it to be a sacrifice, we would accept your offer.”
(Waqidi, II, 614)

Because of his reverence to Allah the Most High, Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) did not exchange the camel, which had been assigned to be a sacrifice, even in return for a hundred camels.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) showed his respect to Allah in every aspect of life. Here, we would like to present some examples. According to Anas’s (r.a.) report, when the Prophet (pbuh) entered the privy he removed his ring, because the expressions “Muhammad the Messenger of Allah” was written on it. (Abu Dawud, Ṭaharah, 10)

In another occasion, Bahz b. Ḥakim’s grandfather (r.a.) came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked him about covering the private parts of the body. The Prophet (pbuh) replied:





“Conceal your private parts except from your wife and from whom your right hands possess (slave-girls).” Allah’s Apostle gave the following response to the same companion’s question about the permissibility of being comfortable when getting dressed when no one is around:

“In respect to be modest before Him, Allah is more entitled than people.”
(Abu Dawud, Hammam, 2)

Because of his reverence to Allah the Almighty, the Prophet (pbuh) advised to those who lost his temper and beat their slaves, despite his warnings about treating the slaves nicely:

“While one of you is beating his slave, his slave tells him “please stop” and mentions Allah’s name, then he should stop immediately.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 32)

After this warning, Abdullah b. Umar (r.a.) began to emancipate his slaves who performed their prayers and exhibited good behavior. When one of his friends told him that some of his slaves were using his good intentions and going to the mosque just to be emancipated, Ibn Umar (r.a.) said:

“We are happy to be deceived by the deceptions of those who try to deceive us with Allah.” (Ibn Athir, *Usd al-Ghabah*, III, 343)

Bishr al-Khafi, a friend of Allah, was a sinner until one day when he found a piece of paper on which Allah’s name was written. He picked it up, cleaned it, and put it in a nice place. That night he heard in his dream:

“You nicely wrapped My name; showed your respect to it. And I will make your name respected in the two worlds.” Upon this Bishr woke up, repented for his sins and sincerely turned towards Allah the Almighty. (Attar, p. 128)

Our predecessors, who made reverence to Allah and His Messenger (pbuh) a natural part of their lives and expressed their respect in every chance they had, did not write the full word “Allah” in their books. They wrote «له» instead of «الله» because of the possibility that their books may be left on the ground.

2. His Love

Just like his reverence, the Prophet’s (pbuh) love for Allah the Almighty was so deep that it is beyond our proper description.



Love, which is a divine elixir and the essence of life, is the sincere and pure form of friendship. Love is the emotional state of a heart, which longs for meeting with the beloved and seeing its beauty. Yusuf Hamadani (q.s.) speaks about two aspects of love as selfish and divine. Then he explains the difference between them as follows: “When a person loves a creation, a state of craziness and senility appears in him/her; whereas, as a result of love for Allah the Almighty, a state of wisdom, insight, and knowledge develops. This is why love for anything other than Allah the Almighty is not appropriate. There is nothing but trash and dirt on the path of Devil, while there are lilies and tulips on the path of Allah the Most Glorious.” (*Rutbat al-Hayat*, p. 69)

In the human body, the heart is the center of love. Allah the Almighty has created only one heart in His servant’s body (al-Ahzab 33; 4) and reserved it for Himself. Allah the Almighty is the true Beloved with whom a heart may fall in love with.

A heart cannot reach the peak levels of love in an instant. Affections for creations are like the steps of a stair that lead to the palace of “love for Allah.” Lawful affection felt for creations prepares the heart for the true love. It is also necessary to ask for His love from Allah the Almighty. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) asked for Divine love in his prayers saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ وَالْعَمَلَ الَّذِي يُبَلِّغُنِي حُبَّكَ.
اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ نَفْسِي وَأَهْلِي وَمِنْ الْمَاءِ الْبَارِدِ

“O Allah! I ask from You Your love, love of those who love You, and deeds which will take me to Your love. O Allah! Make Your love more attractive for me than myself, my family, my property, and cold water.” (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 72)

The true believer should not attach his/her heart to temporary affections of this world but to Allah who is eternal and past eternal. One day, beauty of a mortal beloved will disappear. Therefore, the heart must fall in love with Allah the Eternal.

A believer’s love for Allah must be dominant over other types of love. This is expressed in the Qur’an as follows:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ





“...Those who believe are stauncher in their love for Allah...” (al-Baqarah 2; 165)

If this is the level of love required from believers, then we should think about how great the Prophet’s (pbuh) love for Allah was. His love for Allah was always fresh. Because of his love for Allah, he always showed interest to creations and considered them as means of reminders of his Lord. In order to get closer to Allah, he liked to get familiar with everything manifested by Divine command. With the increase of love for something, everything related to that being also receives its share from that love. Anas b. Malik (r.a.) narrates the following incident in this regard:

“It rained upon us as we were with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) removed his cloth from his shoulder till the rain fell on it. We said: O Messenger of Allah, why did you do this? He said: It is because the rainfall has just come from the Exalted Lord. (Muslim, Istisqa, 13)

The extent of love can be widened from the beloved, which is at the center, towards other existences around the beloved close and far. This is called absolute love and it manifested in the Messenger of Allah in its most perfect sense.

Revelation had an important effect on the increase and freshness of the Prophet’s (pbuh) and his companions’ deep love for Allah. Gradually, revealed verses of the Qur’an consoled the Messenger of Allah and his friends, lessened their sadness and reestablished their connection to Allah. Thus, revelation continued to refresh the love in their hearts. We can observe a remarkable manifestation of their love in the following incident:

Anas (r.a.) reported that after the death of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) Abu Bakr said to ‘Umar, “let us visit Umm Aiman as Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) used to visit her.” As we came to her, she wept. They (Abu Bakr and Umar) said to her:

“What makes you weep? Don’t you know what is in the next world for Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) is better than what is in this worldly life?” She said:

“I weep not because I am ignorant of the fact that what is in store for Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) (in the next world) is better than (this world), but I weep because the revelation which came from the Heaven has ceased to come.”



This caused both of them to cry and they began to weep along with her.
(Muslim, Fada'il al-Sahabah, 103)

On the one hand, they were crying because of the cessation of the revelation, and on the other hand they were happy to know that the Messenger of Allah was receiving the eternal blessings of Allah; because the Prophet (pbuh) lived his life in constant yearning to meet his Beloved and it was time to meet Him. The story of another companion who manifested his love for Allah the Almighty is as follows:

The Prophet sent (an army unit) under the command of a man who led his companions in the prayers and finished his recitation with the 112th chapter of the Qur'an. When they returned (from the battle), they mentioned that to the Prophet. He said (to them), "Ask him why he does so." They asked him and he said, "I do so because it mentions the qualities of the Beneficent Allah and I love to recite it in my prayer." The Prophet said to them, "Tell him that Allah, too, loves him." (Bukhari, Tawhid, 1)

Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s) describes the Prophet's (pbuh) love for Allah as follows:

On the night of ascension, the horizons of all the Seven Heavens were full with the spirits of the Prophets', houris and saints who had come to gaze upon him, having arrayed themselves for his sake—However, he had nothing in his heart except love for his Friend. How indeed should he care for anything except the Beloved? He had become so filled with magnification of Allah, that even those nearest to Allah would find no way (of intruding) there. "In Us (in Our unity) is no room for a prophet sent as an apostle, nor yet for the Angels or the Spirit. (Munawi, IV, 8) Do ye, therefore, understand!" He (also) said, "We are má zágh (that is, Our eye did not rove), we are not (looking for carrion) like crows (zágh)²³; We are intoxicated with (enraptured by) the Dyer; we are not intoxicated with the garden (of flowers with their many dyes)." (Mathnawi, I, verses 3950-3954)

The Prophet's (pbuh) love for Allah was based upon his fear from Allah, and his fear was based upon his love for Him. This is why he (pbuh) often uttered the following supplication:

23. Here Rumi Refers To Chapter 53 Verse 17 From The Qur'an. In This Verse Prophet's State Of Heart Is Explained As Follows: "The Eye Did Not Turn Aside, Nor Did It Exceed The Limit."





اللَّهُمَّ مُصَرِّفَ الْقُلُوبِ صَرِّفْ قُلُوبَنَا عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ

“...O Allah, the Turner of the hearts, turn our hearts to Your obedience.”

(Muslim, Qadar, 17)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) lived all his life in longing to meet his Lord, to whom he was attached to with great love. When his death was near, his longing had reached its peak. Then when he finished his mission in this world and he was left to choose between staying in this world and meeting with his *Rafiq al-‘Ala*, his best Friend, he chose to go to Him. Aisha (r.anha), mother of the believers’, depicts the moments of meeting with his Beloved:

“At his final moments, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) leaned his head on my chest. While I was praying for his recovery saying: “O Lord of human beings! Please heal him! You are the real Healer,” the Prophet (pbuh) was praying:

“No, Dear Lord, let me meet with my best Friend. O Allah! Please forgive me! Show Your mercy on me! Let me meet with my best Friend!” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 108, 231)

In another version of this narration, the rest is reported as follows:

“During his healthy days, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) several times had said:

“None of the prophets’ soul is taken unless his place in Paradise is shown to him. Then he is left to choose between staying in this world and going to his place in Paradise.” When the Prophet (pbuh) became sick and his final moments were close, he leaned his head on my knees, and then fainted. When he got back to himself, he turned his eyes towards the ceiling and said:

“Dear Lord! Best Friend.” I said that Allah’s Messenger was not choosing us. Then I realized that the Prophet’s prayer was a sign of the news that he had been giving us in his healthy days was soon going to come true about him.” (Bukhari, Maghazi, 84; Ibn Hanbal, VI, 89)

The following conversation between Allah’s Messenger and Angel of Death at his final moments shows more clearly the level of his love for Allah the Almighty. The Angel of Death asked for permission to enter, when it was the time of Prophet’s death. Angel Gabriel said,



“O Ahmad! This is Angel of Death. He wants to enter in your room, whereas he has never asked permission from anybody before you and he will not ask from anybody after you. Let him enter.”

The Angel of Death entered into the room and stood before the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

“O Messenger of Allah! O Ahmad! Allah the Almighty has sent me to you and ordered me to obey your commands. If you tell me to take your soul, I will do it; if you command me to leave it, I will leave your soul to you.” Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) asked:

“Are you really going to do this?” Angel replied:

“Yes, I am ordered to obey your command.” Just then Angel Gabriel said:

“O Ahmad! Your Lord misses you.” Upon Gabriel’s words, our beloved Prophet (pbuh) told Angel of Death:

“What is in the presence of Allah is better and permanent. O Angel of Death! Do what you were ordered to do and take my soul.” (Ibn Sa’d, II, 259; Haythami, IX, 34-35; Baladhuri, I, 565)

3. His Submission

“The custom of the knowledgeable and the wise is to be in complete submission to Allah’s Will and His orders. Intelligent ones never feel the pain of greed and degradation.”

Namık Kemal

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was in complete submission to Allah the Almighty as a manifestation of reverence to Him. Submission is an act of an obedient heart and it means to be free from doubts about the matters revealed by Allah, to be free from selfish desires against Allah’s commands, and to be free from the objection to Divine Will and Commands.

The state of submission can only be achieved through the feeling of trust, which reaches the level of confidence. This requires that the trusted carries all the characteristics to be trusted. Therefore, in order to reserve trust only to Allah the Almighty, a person needs to believe that Allah is All-Powerful and that no one can harm or do good to another without Divine Will. He/she also has





to believe that everything is in need of Him but He needs nothing; and there is none comparable to Him. After believing in all these, he/she has to take his/her faith to the level of confidence. This is why a servant's submission to Allah is in the extent of the strength of his/her faith. Since submission constitutes the essence of servitude, it is the most important way of turning towards Allah the Almighty. This inclination begins with faith and increases in the extent of knowledge of Allah.

Submission of the Messenger of Allah was always full and at its peak. There are many remarkable examples of this in his life.

His submission to Allah's will in the cave of Sawr during his migration to Medina, and then later when Suraqa b. Nawfal had chased them, were legendary. During the migration from Mecca to Medina, polytheists were coming after them, and they reached them at the cave of Sawr. Polytheists were checking around the cave and saying:

"If they entered in the cave, then these dove-eggs and spider web would have been broken. Abu Bakr (r.a.) spoke anxiously to the Messenger of Allah,:

"If I get killed, I am only one person; but if you get killed, then your ummah will be devastated. When the Prophet (pbuh) was praying, Abu Bakr waited as a guard. Again he told the Messenger of Allah:

"Your tribe is looking for you. By Allah, I am not worried about myself, but I am worried about you." Allah's Apostle (pbuh) calmed him down saying:

"O Abu Bakr! Don't grieve for Allah is with us." (Bukhari, Fadail al-Ashab, 2; Muslim, Fadail al-Sahabah, 1)

When the miserable Meccans came in front of the cave, they saw nothing but a spider web. This is nicely expressed by the Turkish poet, Ârif Nihat Asya, as follows:

Spider was neither in the air
Not in water, nor on earth
It was in the eyes
which cannot see the Truth

Abu Bakr's and Prophet's state of mind is expressed in the following verse:



“...Grieve not, surely Allah is with us...” (Tawba 9; 40) This Divine statement also points out the secret of togetherness with Allah the Almighty (*ma'iyah*), which is the essence of submission.

The Quraish announced a reward of 100 red camels for anyone who tracked Muhammad and Abu Bakr. Suraqa was enticed. Abu Bakr (r.a.) narrates the rest of the story as follows:

“Suraqa b. Malik pursued us and we were walking on soft, level ground. I said:

“Allah’s Messenger, we are about to be overtaken by them. Thereupon he said:

“Be not grieved. Verily, Allah is with us.”

Then Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said to him and his horse sank into the earth. I think he also said: I know you have hurled curse upon me. So supplicate Allah for me and I take an oath that I shall turn everyone away who would come in search of you. So he (Allah’s Messenger) supplicated Allah and he was rescued and he came back and he said to everyone he met: I have combed all this side. In short, he diverted everyone whom he met and he in fact fulfilled his promise. (Bukhari, Manaqib, 45; Muslim, Zuhd, 75)

Submission is based upon the understanding that the lover can sacrifice everything he/she has, even his/her life, for the sake of his/her beloved. This is why Allah’s Messenger did not complain about his afflictions because of his submission to Allah. He would remember his submission to his Lord when he faced the difficulties of the daily life. In fact when his finger was injured by a stone, he uttered the following words:

هَلْ أَنْتِ إِلَّا إِصْبَعٌ دَمِيَتْ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَا لَقِيتِ

“You are just a little finger which has bled, and what you have experienced is in the cause of Allah.” (Bukhari, Adab, 90; Muslim, Jihad, 112)

Companions’ of the Prophet (pbuh) also manifested exemplary behaviors of submission. According to a narration, some hypocrites tried to dissuade Muslims from going to the Battle of Badr saying that Meccans had been gathering a strong army; however, this news strengthened the believer’s submission and trust to Allah the Almighty and they said without showing weakness:





“Allah is sufficient for us! Most Excellent is He in Whom we trust!” This wonderful behavior is stated in the following verses:

“Men said to them: a great army is gathering against you: and frightened them: but it (only) increased their Faith: they said: for us Allah suffices, and he is the best Disposer of affairs. And they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allah: no harm ever touched them: for they followed the good pleasure of Allah: and Allah is the Lord of bounties unbounded.” (Al-i Imran 3; 173-74) (Wahidi, p. 135)

Submission of the believers - saying that “Allah is sufficient for us, the enemy’s number is not important” - and holding the contentment of Allah before anything else made them successful without falling into any difficulty; because Allah does not let down the trust of those who have confidence in Him. Therefore, what is required for believers is to not have any doubts in faith and to have an unshakable confidence and submission to Allah the Most High. This is their greatest strength and the secret behind their success.

According to the narration of Abdullah b. Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them), Abraham (pbuh), too, said, **“Allah is sufficient for us! Most Excellent is He in Whom we trust!”** when he was thrown into fire. In fact Allah the Almighty presents him as the symbol of submission in the following verse:

“When his Lord said unto him: Surrender! He said: I have surrendered to the Lord of the Worlds.” (al-Baqarah 2; 131)

The Prophet (pbuh) said that when hypocrites said, “A great army is gathering against you, therefore, fear them,” but it only increased their faith and they said: **“Allah is sufficient for us! Most Excellent is He in Whom we trust!”** and they presented a matchless example of submission to Allah the Almighty. (Bukhari, Tafser, 3/13)

Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) depicts the Prophet’s (pbuh) state of submission through the following wonderful metaphors:

“I am not a straw, I am a mountain of forbearance and patience and justice: how should the fierce wind carry off the mountain? That which is removed from its place by a wind is rubbish, for indeed the contrary winds are many. The wind of anger and the wind of lust and the wind of greed swept away him that performed not the (ritual) prayers. “I am a mountain, and my being is His building; and if I become like a straw, my wind (the wind that



moves me) is His wind. My longing is not stirred save by His wind; my captain is naught but love of the One.” (Mathnawi, I, verses: 3794-3798)

The life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is teemed with perfect examples of his confidence and trust in Allah under the most difficult circumstances. He stood firm even when the strongest willpower dissolved. His submission can be observed in every moment of his blessed life.

As it is narrated by Abu Said Al-Khudri, a man came to the Prophet and said,

“My brother has some abdominal trouble.”

The Prophet said to him, *“Let him drink honey sherbet.”*

The man came for the second time and the Prophet said to him, *“Let him drink honey.”* He came for the third time and the Prophet said, *“Let him drink honey.”* He returned again and said, *“I have done that”* the Prophet then said, *“Allah has said the truth, but your brother’s abdomen has told a lie. Let him drink honey.”* So he made him drink honey and he was cured.” (Bukhari, Ṭib, 4; Muslim, Salam, 91)

The Prophet (pbuh) was referring to the fact mentioned in the verse: **“Then eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord, made smooth (for thee). There comes forth from their bellies a drink diverse of colors, wherein is healing for mankind. Lo! Herein is indeed a portent for people who reflect.”** (al-Nahl 16; 69). Thus, he showed his trust and submission to Allah the Almighty.

We can observe manifestation of submission in the lives of other prophets and righteous believers similar to the state of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). One of them is our mother Hagar. Our Prophet (pbuh) narrates her submission as follows:

“Abraham brought Hagar and her son Ishmael while she was suckling him to Mecca... Abraham placed near them a leather bag containing some dates, and a small water-skin containing some water, and set out homeward. Hagar followed him and asked:

“O Abraham! Where are you going, leaving us in this valley where there is no person whose company we may enjoy, nor is there anything (to enjoy)?” She repeated that to him many times, but he did not look back at her. Then she





asked him, “Has Allah ordered you to do so?” He said, “Yes.” Then she (feeling relaxed) said, “Then Allah will protect us,” and returned while Abraham proceeded onwards, and on reaching the Thaniyya where they could not see him, he faced the Ka’ba, and raising both hands, invoked Allah saying the following prayers:

“O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring dwell in a valley without cultivation, by Your Sacred House (Ka’bah at Mecca) in order, O our Lord, that they may offer prayer perfectly. So fill some hearts among men with love towards them, and (O Allah) provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks.” (Ibrahim 14; 37) (Bukhari, Anbiya, 9)

As much as the submission of our mother Hagar, Abraham’s submission to Allah’s command to leave his wife and little child alone in a deserted valley is very exemplary for us. As a result of his submission, Allah the Almighty has made Mecca a blessed place on earth and proclaimed whatever they had done in this blessed place as the required parts of the pilgrimage to Mecca (*Haji*) until the end of days. Allah has made their names remembered with gratitude because of their submission and consent.



II. PROPHET'S COMPLIANCE TO DIVINE MEASURES

Divine measures are the principles related to this world and the Hereafter, which were revealed to the Prophet (pbuh). The wisdom behind the Messenger of Allah being sent as a guide to humanity is that so he can live an exemplary life within the limits of commands and prohibitions of Allah and so people can practice the Divine orders.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) lived his entire life in lofty consciousness of being under Divine control. This characteristic of his manifests itself in his compliance to Divine orders in every aspect of his life, be it something personal or something about other people. Our master's (pbuh) success in this matter comes from the fact that his love and submission to Allah imprinted deeply in his soul. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who was the most knowledgeable and fearful of Allah the Almighty, was the most fastidious one in obedience to His orders and prohibitions.

A. His Meticulousness in Following the Divine Commands

Divine orders vary in types and levels. Just as there are some that are related to the external and internal sides of a human being, there are others that are related to his relation with himself, with Allah, and with other people. Our Prophet (pbuh) dutifully performed all levels of Divine orders and lived his life on the straight path. Despite their difficulty, he performed all steps of the straight path, or *Shari'ah*, *tariqah*, *haqiqah*, and *ma'rifah*, as the role model for those who would like to walk on that path. Although, he was meticulous in matters related to his personal life, his attentiveness was much stronger in matters of social life. In this respect, it is possible to find many examples in his life.

His meticulousness can be observed especially in cases of punishments of crimes concerning human rights. Considering the Divine order in the verse, **"...And let not pity for the twain withhold you from obedience to Allah,**





if you believe in Allah and the Last Day..." (al-Nur 24; 2) our Prophet (pbuh) said that:

"Apply the punishments of Allah to those who are closely related to you and to those who are not related. No criticism of the critics should hold you from performing the order of Allah." (Ibn Majah, Hudud, 3)

"Giving one of the punishments of Allah is better for a town than to get rain for forty nights." (Ibn Majah, Hudud, 3)

In a matter ordered by Allah the Almighty, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was never dilatory or acted contrary to His orders. Following is an important incident in this regard.

The Quraish were concerned about a woman from the tribe of Makhzum, who had committed theft during the lifetime of Allah's Apostle (pbuh). They said:

"Who would speak to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) about her?" They (again) said:

"Who can dare do this but Usama b Zaid, the loved one of Allah's Messenger (pbuh)?" She was brought to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and Usama b. Zaid spoke about her to him (interceded on her behalf). The color of the face of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) changed, and he said:

"Do you intercede in one of the prescribed punishments of Allah?" He (Usama) said:

"Messenger of Allah, seek forgiveness for me." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stood up and gave an address.

"He (first) glorified Allah as He deserves, and then said: Now to our topic. This (injustice) destroyed those before you that when any one of (high) rank committed theft among them, they spared him, and when any weak one among them committed theft, they inflicted the prescribed punishment upon him. By Him in Whose Hand is my life, even if Fatima daughter of Muhammad were to commit theft, I would have cut off her hand." (Bukhari, Anbiya, 54; Muslim, Hudud, 8, 9)

Allah the Glorious prohibited the killing of an innocent person and regarded it such a great sin as killing the entire humanity. (al-Maidah 5; 32) The



Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was very meticulous and sensitive in this matter. Below is another good example that shows this.

“It is narrated on the authority of Miqdad b. Aswad that he said:

“Messenger of Allah, you just see (here is a point): If I encountered a person amongst the infidels (in the battlefield) and he attacked me and struck me and cut off one of my hands with the sword. Then he (in order to protect himself from me) took shelter of a tree and said: I become Muslim for Allah’s sake. Messenger of Allah, can I kill him after he had uttered this?”

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Do not kill him.” I (the narrator) said:

“Messenger of Allah, he cut off my hand and uttered this after amputating it; should I then kill him?” The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Don’t kill him, for If you kill him, verily he would be in a position where you had been before killing him and verily you would be in a position where he had been before uttering (kalima).” (Bukhari, Maghazi, 12; Muslim, Iman, 155)

A similar incident is reported by Uthama b. Zaid about himself.

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) sent us to the people of Huraqat, a tribe of Juhaina. We attacked the tribe early in the morning and defeated them. A man from the Ansar and I caught hold of a person (of the defeated tribe). When we overcame him, he said:

“There is no god but Allah.”

At that moment the Ansari spared him, but I attacked him with my spear and killed him. The news had already reached the Apostle (pbuh), so when we came back he (the Apostle) said to me:

“Usama, did you kill him after he had made the profession: There is no god but Allah?”

I said:

“Messenger of Allah, he did it only as a shelter.”

The Holy Prophet observed:





“Did you kill him after he had made the profession that there is no god but Allah?” He (the Holy Prophet) went on repeating this to me till I wished I had not embraced Islam before that day.” (Bukhari, Diyat, 2; Muslim, Iman, 158-159)

“O you who believe when you go abroad in the cause of Allah, investigate carefully, and say not to anyone who offers you a salutation: you are none of a Believer coveting the perishable goods of this life...” (al-Nisa 4; 94) (Wahidi, p. 175-177)

In this way, our beloved Prophet (pbuh) shows us through his exemplary deeds how we should act in matters about which there is a clear command from Allah the Almighty.

B. His Sensitivity about what is Lawful and Unlawful

“...These are the limits imposed by Allah, so approach them not...”

(al-Baqara 2; 187)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was very sensitive about observing what was lawful and unlawful. Aisha (r.a.), mother of the believers, expresses this characteristic of the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

“Whenever Allah’s Apostle was given the choice of one of two matters he would choose the easier of the two as long as it was not sinful to do so, but if it was sinful, he would not approach it.” (Bukhari, Manaqib, 23)

One of the significant points in this narration is that the Prophet (pbuh) would choose the easier one of his options if it was not a sin. Another point is that he was the most sensitive person about staying away from sins. For instance, unlawful gain comes at the head of the things which the Prophet (pbuh) wanted the believers to stay away from. This is expressed in the following saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

“The inmates of Paradise are three: One who yields to authority and is just and fair; one who is truthful and has been endowed with power to do good deeds. And the person who is merciful and kind hearted towards his relatives and to every pious Muslim, and one who does not stretch his hand to unlawful in spite of having a large family to support.” (Muslim, Jannah, 63)



Two characteristics of the third group in Paradise are mentioned in this hadith. One of the characteristics is to earn one's own livelihood and to not ask for help from others. The other characteristic is to abstain from sins and from anything leading to commit sins. People should not forget that the most important thing to do in this world is to get ready for the eternal life of the Hereafter. In order to achieve this, one must earn his/her livelihood through lawful ways, should not resort to illicit ways, and should not beg to anyone. If a human being protects the dignity of being a servant of Allah and continues to work by believing that Allah will give him the means to earn his/her livelihood through licit ways Allah the Almighty will bestow him/her the infinite blessings of the Hereafter. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) lived according to these measures and advised his followers to do the same.

The Prophet (pbuh) warned the believers saying, *"A time will come when one will not care how he/she gains his/her livelihood, legally or illegally."* (Bukhari, Buyu, 7, 23) He paid extra attention to discipline children. He did everything to raise children to be sensitive about the matter of "lawful and unlawful." In fact he gives the following advice to the believers:

"Do not oblige a child to earn money. If he does not find a way to earn it, he may steal. Do not oblige a slave-girl to earn money unless she has a skill. If you oblige her to do that, she may earn money by doing unchaste things. Pardon them since Allah will pardon you, and you must feed them good food." (Malik, Muwatta, Isti'dhan, 42)

Unlawful food makes its owner not only disgraced among people, but also worthless in the presence of Allah the Almighty. Allah does not accept his/her supplications. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) expressed many times in his sayings that paying attention to what is lawful and unlawful is necessary for the acceptance of prayers. One of his sayings, in this regard, is as follows:

"Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as saying: *O people, Allah is Good and He therefore, accepts only that which is good. And Allah commanded the believers as He commanded the Messengers by saying: "O Messengers, eat of the good things, and do good deeds; verily I am aware of what you do"* (Mu'minun 23; 51). And He said: *"O those who believe, eat of the good things that We gave you"* (al-Baqarah 2; 172) *A person travels widely. He lifts his hand towards the sky, his hair disheveled and covered with dust, and begs his Lord saying: "O Lord, O Lord," whereas his diet is unlawful, his*





drink is unlawful, and his clothes are unlawful and his nourishment is unlawful. How can then his supplication be accepted?” (Muslim, Zakat, 65)

The measures of the Prophet (pbuh) are very clear. Even if someone puts his/her life at risk for his/her religion and makes long journeys, if he/she is fed by unlawful food, his/her sacrifices will be worthless. Faith, nourishing with lawful food, and observing the orders of Islam are the things that make a Muslim the purest person in the world. This way he/she purifies not just his/her body but also his/her soul.

The Prophet’s (pbuh) sensitivity about what is lawful and unlawful can be clearly seen in the following hadith:

“If one of you loans money to his brother, and if the borrower would like to give him a present in return, he should not accept it. If the borrower would like to give him his ride, he should not get on; unless such things have been a custom between them.” (Ibn Majah, Sadaqat, 19)

Someone owed money to Imam Abu Hanifah, who strictly observed the above mentioned principles in his life. One day, one of the disciples of the Imam from the same neighborhood of the borrower passed away. Abu Hanifah went to the funeral. It was a very hot day, but he did not rest under the shadow of the wall of the borrower because he considered that this would be usury for his loan. (Attar, p. 243)

Below is a narration by Abu Ruhm al-Ghifari about the sensitivity of the Messenger of Allah in this matter.

“We reached Khaibar and besieged them, and (we continued the siege) until extreme hunger afflicted us. During the siege about twenty or thirty domestic donkeys went out of the fortress. Jews could not take them in. Believers caught the donkeys and slaughtered them. When it was evening of the day on which the city was conquered, Muslims lit many fires and began to cook their meat. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) asked:

“What are these fires? And what are they cooking?”

They said:

“They are cooking meat.”

He asked again: “Which meat?”



They said:

“That of domestic asses.”

He said:

“Let them throw the meat away and break the pots (in which it is being cooked).”

A man said:

“What would you say if we throw it away and wash the pots?”

He said: *“Okay, you may do that.”* (Bukhari, Maghazi, 38; Muslim, Jihad, 123)

Here, the most remarkable point is that this incident happened on a very hot day and when the believer’s hunger was unbearable. Even under such circumstances, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not let his companions eat unlawful food and immediately stopped them.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) showed similar sensitivity in all aspects of life. For instance, he always walked looking down so that he protected his eyes from seeing unlawful or suspicious things. He also advised his companions to do the same. When Jarir (r.a.) asked the Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) about the sudden glance at an unlawful thing, he commanded him to turn away his eyes. (Muslim, Adab, 45)

The following incident narrated by Umm Salamah is more interesting:

“I was with the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) while Maymunah was with him. Then Ibn Umm Maktum came. This happened when we were ordered to observe covering our bodies and hair. The Prophet (pbuh) said: Cover yourselves from him. We asked: Apostle of Allah! is he not blind? He can neither see us nor recognize us. The Prophet (pbuh) said: Are both of you blind? Do you not see him?” (Abu Dawud, Libas, 34)

In the above mentioned incidents, we see that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) kept his friends and family members away from unlawful things just like he did himself.

Another significant point about paying attention to what is lawful and unlawful is the danger to confuse them. In other words, someone may accept something that is lawful as being unlawful and vice versa. The Prophet (pbuh)





warned believers in this matter. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) narrates the following incident in this respect:

“A man came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and told him:

“When I eat meat, I feel a strong desire for women. Because of that I forbade myself to eat meat.” Upon this the following verse was revealed:

“O you who believe! Forbid not the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, but transgress not: for Allah loves not those given to excess. Eat of the things which Allah hath provided for you, lawful and good; but fear Allah, in whom you believe.” (al-Maidah, 5; 87-88) (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 5; 14)

When this incident is examined, at first the companion’s behavior seems innocent and logical, but in reality it was so wrong that a verse was revealed to correct it. The verse clearly manifests that something permitted by Allah should not be prohibited by anybody’s personal desires. Fakhr al-Din Razi states that six different prohibitions exist in the verse: **“...Forbid not the good things which Allah has made lawful for you...”**:

1. Do not believe that something permitted by Allah can be prohibited, because this means disbelief.
2. Do not say that something permitted by Allah is forbidden.
3. Do not stay away from things which are permitted by Allah like you stay away from things forbidden by Allah.
4. Do not issue *fatwas* (legal opinions) and make permitted things prohibited for other people.
5. Do not take a vow about forbidding the permitted things to yourself
6. Do not mix your property with stolen items in a way which they cannot be separated again; because, mixing lawful property with unlawful gains makes the entire property unlawful.

The statement of **“but transgress not”** presents “turning a permitted thing into something prohibited” as transgression of the limits of servitude and oppression. At the same time, this statement warns about wasting lawful things while permitting their consumption. We can also infer from this verse



that Allah permits the consumption of clean things and warns to stay away from the impure and unlawful.

The following verse at the beginning of sixty sixth chapter of the Qur'an discusses the same objective, **“O Prophet! why do you forbid (yourself) that which Allah has made lawful for you; you seek to please your wives; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”** (al-Tahrim 66; 1)

After the Age of Happiness, the friends of Allah, who closely followed the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah, stayed away from unlawful nourishment. Here is an exemplary story from Ibrahim b. Adham's life. He narrates:

“One day I wrapped myself in a straw mat and was lying in the mosque of Bayt al-Maqdis. At midnight the mosques' door opened and an old saint came in. He performed a two rak'ah prayer and then he turned and sat down. After that forty more men came in. One of them said:

“Someone is lying here.”

The old saint said smiling: “He is Ibrahim b. Adham. He could not feel the taste of his prayers for the last forty days.” When I heard his final words, I went to him. After greeting him, I asked:

“For the sake of Allah, tell me the reason of my state.”

He replied:

“One day you purchased some dates from a market in Basra. A date fell down from your bag; you thought it was yours and you picked it up; however it was not yours. This is why you lost the spiritual taste.

I immediately went to the market and asked the forgiveness of the date seller. This situation affected the date seller as well so much that he became one of the pious believers from that day on spending his wealth in charity. (Attar, p. 122-23)

In short, the issue of lawful and unlawful constitutes the essence of our religious life and the happiness in the Hereafter. Being sensitive about other people's rights is also an important part of this.





C. His Sensitivity about Other People's Rights

“On the Day of Judgment, a man flees from his brother, and from his mother and his father, and from his wife and his children.”

(Abasah, 80; 34-36)

Violation of other people's rights is one of the greatest sins, which is regarded outside the endless mercy of Allah. Allah the Almighty has given the right to either punish or forgive the person whose right is violated. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) showed extra sensitivity to people's rights and presented many exemplary behaviors in this matter. One of them is narrated by Abu Dhur'a (r.a.) as follows:

“During the expedition to Taif, I prepared Quşwa, prophet's camel, for him to ride, when we were in a place called Qarn al-Manazil. I held Quşwa's rein and handed it to the Prophet (pbuh) after he got on his camel. Then I got on its pillion. Allah's Messenger was whipping the camel; and every time he whipped the camel, his whip was touching me, too. Then the Prophet (pbuh) turned to me and asked:

“Did my whip touch you?” I replied:

“Yes, O Messenger of Allah. May my father and mother be sacrificed for you.”

When we reached Jiranah, there were some cattle on one corner. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked some questions about the booty to the man waiting by them. After the man answered his questions, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) called me. I answered his call. He told me:

“Take these cattle in return for the whips which touched you yesterday.” When I counted them, I found out that there were one hundred and twenty of them. These had been my most valuable possessions.” (Waqidi, III, 939)

In this example, fairness of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) about other people's rights sheds light to centuries. We should imagine how wonderful our world would be, when it is shaped by the measures of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

From an unknown person, Harb b. Surayj narrates the following exemplary story about the spiritual responsibility of people's rights.



“I went to Medina and camped in the valley. Two people were bargaining for a goat. The buyer asked for a discount from the seller. Just then I saw someone coming. I told myself “I wonder if this was the Hashimite who misguided the people.” He was a handsome man with finely shaped eyebrows and a beautiful face. He was wearing two pieces of old dress. He directly came and greeted us. A little later the buyer called him:

“O Messenger of Allah! Tell him to make a discount for me.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) extended his hand and told him:

“... Your property belongs to you. I hope when I meet my Lord on Judgment Day, none of you face me claiming that I had violated his/her rights. May Allah the Almighty have mercy on those who provide convenience in buying, selling, holding, giving, and judging...”

The person who narrated this incident was affected by the Prophet’s words so much that he followed the Prophet (pbuh), asked him many questions about Islam, and then he converted to Islam saying:

“Until then there was not anybody whom I hated more than him; but now he is dearer to me than my children, my mother and father, and all other people.” (Haythami, IX, 18)

We should not violate people’s rights and be the cause of their tears, because there is no barrier between Allah the Almighty and the supplication of an oppressed.

With respect to other people’s rights, the Prophet (pbuh) expresses the significance of paying their rights back as follows:

“Narrated by Abu Huraira: Allah’s Apostle said, “Whoever has oppressed another person concerning his reputation or anything else, he should beg him to forgive him before the Day of Resurrection when there will be no money (to compensate for wrong deeds), but if he has good deeds, those good deeds will be taken from him according to his oppression which he has done, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him.” (Bukhari, Mazalim, 10)

Those who violated other people’s rights should first ask for the forgiveness of the oppressed and then repent for their oppression before Judgment Day comes. For Judgment Day is the day of reckoning that neither gold nor





silver will be helpful. Real damage, loss, and failure are those stated in the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh). In this respect, a believer is required not only to continue ritual prayers, fasting, almsgiving, and other types of worship, but also to stay away from the prohibitions of Islam.

The Prophet said, *“A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands...”* (Bukhari, Iman, 4-5). Thus, he nicely expresses the significance of observing other people’s rights. He warns those who oppress and violate other people’s rights about Hell-fire. It is narrated on the authority of Abu Umama that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) once said:

“He who appropriated the right of a Muslim by swearing a false oath, Allah would make Hell-fire necessary for him and would declare Paradise forbidden for him.

A man said to him:

“O Messenger of Allah, even if it is something insignificant?”

The Holy Prophet (pbuh) replied:

“Yes, even if it is the twig of an arak tree.” (Muslim, Iman, 218)

Another type of violating people’s rights is to usurp or inappropriately use the state property. Especially those who work for public duties have to be very sensitive. Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) makes serious warnings in this respect. One of the incidents that express such warnings is as follows:

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) appointed a man from the Asad tribe who was called Ibn Lutbiyya in charge of collecting Sadaqa from the people on behalf of the State. When he returned (with the collections), he said:

“This is for you and (this is mine as) it was presented to me as a gift.” The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stood on the pulpit and praised Allah and extolled Him. Then he said:

“I appointed someone as a State official who comes to me and says: This is for you and this has been presented to me as a gift. If he was saying the truth, why didn’t he stay in the house of his father or the house of his mother to see whether gifts were presented to him or not? By the Being in Whose Hand is the life of Muhammad, any one of you will not take anything from it but will bring it on the Day of Judgment, carrying on his neck a camel that will be growling, or a cow that will be bellowing or an ewe that will be bleating.”



Then he raised his hands so that we could see the whiteness of his armpits. Then he said twice:

“O Allah, have I conveyed (Your Commandments)?” (Muslim, Imarah, 26; Bukhari; Zakat, 3)

Here it is also expresses that those who work for the state must be very careful about the gifts given to them. These gifts are not really their rights. Therefore, when these duties are performed, one must be very careful and trustworthy. Because these properties belong to the public, even the least inequity is considered one of the greatest sins.

The following historical account shows how sensitive our predecessors were and how much they paid attention to live according to the warnings of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Before Ottoman Sultan Vahdettin left Istanbul, he asked that a book called *Kıyâmetnâme* be brought to him with its receipt. When he was forced to leave his country, he returned this book, whose miniatures were worth more than two million gold pieces at the time, to the state treasure. The people around him said:

“These are the gifts presented to you and your family by other sultans. Therefore these are your own possessions. There are buyers ready to pay two-three million gold pieces for this book. Could not you at least keep this with you as insurance? Sultan Vahdettin told them:

“You are right these are our personal property, for which we do not have to give any explanation. But think about, who would give my family these gifts if they were not sultans of this nation? Therefore my people have right in this property as much as I do. This is why I cannot betray my people.”²⁴

This historical fact is a wonderful manifestation of how the Prophet’s Sunnah has been actively followed, protected, and held dearer than everything else by the believers for centuries.

It is narrated by ‘Umar b. Khattab (r.a.) that when it was the day of Khairbar a party of Companions of the Apostle (pbuh) came there and said:

“So and so is a martyr,”

Then they happened to pass by a man and said:

24. Mısıroğlu, Kadir, *Lozan Zafer Mi Hezîmet Mi?*, Iii, 150. (Quoted From Refî Cevad Ule unay, “Bu Gözler Neler Gördü?...” *Tercüman Gazetesi*, 18 November 1969)





“So and so is a martyr.” Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) told them:

“Nay, not so verily I have seen him in the Fire for the garment or cloak that he had stolen from the booty...” (Muslim, Iman, 182)

Even though martyrdom is atonement for all kinds of sins, it cannot clear away the betrayal against state property. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) informed that someone who had stolen a garment from state property was in Hell and he taught his ummah that this was an unforgivable sin.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira:

“We went to Khaibar along with the Apostle (pbuh) and Allah granted us victory. We plundered neither gold nor silver but laid our hands on goods, corn and clothes, and then bent our stops to a valley; along with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) there was a slave who was presented to him by one Rifa’a b. Zaid of the family of Judham, a tribe of Dubayb. When we got down into the valley the slave of the Messenger of Allah stood up and began to unpack the saddle-bag and was suddenly struck by a stray arrow which proved fatal. We said:

“There is a greeting for him, O Messenger of Allah, as he is a martyr.” Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) remarked:

“Nay, not so. By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, the small garment which he stole from the booty on the day of Khaibar but which did not legitimately fall to his lot is burning like the Fire (of Hell) on him.”

The people were greatly scared on hearing this. A man brought to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) a lace or two laces and said:

“O Messenger of Allah, I took those on the day of Khaibar before the booty was distributed. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) told him:

“This is a lace of fire or two laces of fire. (He meant that there will be punishment for them)” (Bukhari, Ayman, 33; Muslim, Iman, 183)

Nothing can protect a person against Hell-fire, if he/she is a sinner, even if he/she was a companion, and even if he/she was in the service of the Prophet (pbuh). The companions in the above mentioned traditions were sent to Hell for stealing from state property; thus, they committed a great sin. In order to warn his followers to be careful under such circumstances the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) used to say:



“Some people spend Allah’s Wealth (i.e. Muslim’s wealth) in an unjust manner; such people will be put in the (Hell) Fire on the Day of Resurrection.” (Bukhari, Khumus, 7)

Another dangerous situation about violating people’s rights happens when resolving the disagreements among people. When there is a disagreement between two people, they take it to the court and file a lawsuit. Both sides defend themselves; and finally one of them wins the case and the other loses. However, the question of “whether the right side or the wrong side won the case” occupies the minds. In this respect, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) warns the believers as follows:

“You bring to me, for (judgment) your disputes, some of you perhaps being more eloquent in their plea than others, so I give judgment on their behalf according to what I hear from them. (Bear in mind, in my judgment) if I slice off anything for him from the right of his brother, he should not accept that, for I sliced off for him a portion from the Hell.” (Bukhari, Shahadat, 27; Muslim, Aqdiyyah, 4)

Here is a famous proverb which is based on the above mentioned prophetic saying:

نَحْنُ نَحْكُمُ بِالظَّوَاهِرِ وَاللَّهُ يَتَوَلَّى السَّرَائِرَ

“We only judge based on the appearance, while only Allah knows the reality of the affairs.”

As it is stated in the proverb, human deeds require to be judged based on their appearance. People cannot know the unknown and inner sides of incidents unless Allah the Almighty lets them to be known. Like everybody else the Prophet (pbuh), too, judged based on the appearance of the affairs. He, too, was obliged to judge based on the statement of the witnesses, evidences, and oaths. Thus, he manifested the best example for his ummah in this manner. However, eloquence of the statements from witnesses and evidences may affect the result and it may not reflect the truth. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) threatens those who unjustly win the trial with Hell-fire. This is why parties of a trial and those who are responsible for the judgment should be very careful.





In respect to people's rights, Islam does not discriminate human beings based on their religion or sect. The following narration clearly expresses this reality:

Tu'mah b. Ubayriq, from the tribe of the sons of Zafar, had stolen armor from his neighbor Qatadah b. Nu'man. He put the armor in a flour sack. Because the sack had holes in it, it leaked flour all the way from Qatadah's house to Tu'mah's. Then he hid the armor in Jewish Zayd b. Thamin's house. When people searched and could not find the armor in Tu'mah's house, he said:

"By Allah, I did not take it and I know nothing about it." Upon this, owners of the armor said:

"Nay, by Allah he stole it. We saw him coming to our house; then he took the armor. We followed his trace to his house and we also saw the trail of flour." The Prophet (pbuh) asked Tu'mah to swear that he had not stolen it. After he swore, the owners had to leave him. Then they followed the trace of flour, and found the house of the Jewish man. They brought him to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The Jew said:

"Tu'mah b. Ubayriq gave me the armor" and a Jewish group testified for him. Tu'mah's tribe, the sons of Zafar, came to the Messenger of Allah and defended their friend saying:

"O Messenger of Allah! If you do not punish this Jew for his crime, our friend will be ruined and will fall into disgrace." Upon this, Allah the Almighty revealed the following verse and clearly showed who was guilty and who was not:

"And plead not on behalf of (people) who deceive themselves. Lo! Allah loves not one who is treacherous and sinful." (al-Nisa 4; 107) Tu'mah escaped and ran to Mecca instead of repenting, and he converted out of Islam. (Tabari, *Tafsir*, IV, 364-365; Wahidi, p. 183)

In regards to such matters, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) says:

"May Allah curse those who cheat my ummah about the matters of religion or about the worldly matters..." (Muslim, Iman, 164) Being Muslim is not a requirement for the claimant or the owner of the right. The right has to be given to its real owner, no matter what his/her religion is. This can be observed in the following incident:



“Muslims’ preparations for the expedition to Khaibar made the Medinan Jews, who had signed a contract with the Muslims, worried and they took an action. They knew that the Prophet’s army would defeat the Jews of Khaibar like they defeated the Jews of Qaynuqah, Nadir, and Qurayzah. All the Medinan Jews, who had given loans to Muslims, asked for their loans back.

Abdullah b. Abi Hadrat owed five dirham to Jewish Abu Shahm. Abdullah had bought some barley from Abu Shahm. When Abu Shahm asked for his loan back, Abdullah told him:

“Give me some more time. God willing, I will pay my debt; because Allah the Most High has promised believers the booty of Khaibar. O Abu Shahm! We are going to the richest city in Hijaz.” Abu Shahm got very angry:

“Do you mistake the Khaibar Jews with the Arabs you fought before? I swear by the name of Torah, there are more than ten thousand warriors in Khaibar.” Abdullah replied:

“O enemy of Allah! You are under our protection. By Allah, I will take you to the Messenger of Allah.” And he took Abu Shahm to the Prophet (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Listen to what this Jew says.” Then he informed the Prophet (pbuh) about what Abu Shahm had said before. For a while Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stayed quiet and did not say anything. But his lips were moving. Abu Shahm said:

“O Abu al-Qasim! He violated my rights. He did not pay my money back.” The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) told Abdullah:

“Give his money back.” Abdullah replied:

“I swear by Allah who has sent you as the right Prophet, I do not have the means to pay my debt back.” The Prophet (pbuh) told him again:

“Give his money back.” Abdullah replied:

“I swear by the One in whose Power my being is, I do not have the means to pay my debt back. I was hoping that you would take us to Khaibar, and we would get some share from the booty. I told him that I was going to pay my debt back from my booty share when I got back.” Allah’s messenger (pbuh) told him third time:





"Give his money back." Upon this Abdullah went to the Medina market. He took of his cloak and wrapped himself with his turban. He sold his cloak for four dirhams. He then found one more dirham and paid his debt back." (Ibn Hanbal, III, 423; Waqidi, II, 634-635)

At the end of his life, the Prophet (pbuh) gave his companions similar advice because of its significance:

"I am a human being. Some of you might have their rights on me. If I had taken anything from your property, here are my possessions. He/she can come and take his/her right. I want you to know it well that for me the best of you is the one who either comes and takes his/her right or wholeheartedly gives it up to me. So I can go to the presence of my Lord with a clear conscience."

No one can say that "he/she fears from the enmity and hate of the Messenger of Allah." You should know it well that I do not bear grudge and enmity to anybody. I do not feel disdainful to repeat my words to you." Then he repeated his words. An Arab got up and said:

"O Prophet of Allah, once you told me to give someone three dirhams and I did." Muhammad (pbuh) said:

"You are telling the truth." He immediately asked Fadl to pay him his due. Then he continued his words:

"Dear Lord! I am just a human being. If I should ever say a harsh word or lash at a believer, let that be a means for him/her as a blessing, mercy, and reward in the Hereafter." (Ibn Hanbal, III, 400)

"O Allah! If I should ever abuse a believer, please let that be a means of bringing him near to You on the Day of Resurrection." (Bukhari, Daawat, 34) Then he said:

"O, People. Whosoever owes anything to anyone should repay his debt and should not feel humiliated in this world, for it is easier to be ashamed here than on the Day of the Judgment." (Ibn Sa'd, II, 255; Tabari, *Tarikh*, III, 191)

If a believer wants to be close to the Prophet (pbuh) on the Day of Judgment, it is necessary for him/her to follow his footsteps, obey his commands, and be very careful about other people's rights. In order to reach this goal, all means and opportunities should be wisely utilized.



D. His Attention about Avoidance from Suspicious Things

“Leave the suspicious (doubtful) things for the things that are not suspicious.”

(Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 60)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was very careful about staying away from suspicious things in order to protect himself from committing unlawful deeds. In this regard, he (pbuh) gave his followers the following advice:

“Both legal and illegal things are evident but in between them there are doubtful (suspicious) things and most of the people have no knowledge about them. So whoever saves himself from these suspicious things saves his religion and his honor. And whoever indulges in these suspicious things is like a shepherd who grazes his animals near the Hima (private pasture) of someone else and at any moment there is a risk to get in it. O people! Beware! Every king has a Hima and the Hima of Allah on the earth are the things forbidden by Him...” (Bukhari, Iman, 39; Muslim, Musaqat, 107)

At first glance, some matters cannot be known whether they are lawful or unlawful due to lack of clear regulations about them. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) states that many people do not know the rulings about them. Muslim scholars have revealed them by comparing them to similar cases. Therefore, we need to stay away from questionable things; because, if it is something unlawful, we protect ourselves from committing something unlawful; if it is something lawful, there is no harm staying away from it because of piety.

Doubtful matters appear either as a result of contradiction of the religious evidences or due to the disagreement of Muslim scholars. They might be “abominable (*makruh*)” or “permissible (*mubah*).” Abominable things are like a step between a servant and unlawful things. Those who allow abominable things too much in their lives face the danger of falling into unlawfulness. Permissible things, on the other hand, are like steps between servants and abominable things. If servants allow them too much in their lives, they may commit the abominable. Therefore, we should avoid things which may lead us to abominable or unlawful things even if they are permissible. Growing a habit to perform detestable things (*makruh*) may lead the person to do the unlawful similar to them. In fact this is expressed in the following saying of the Prophet (pbuh):





“Both legal and illegal things are obvious, and in between them are (suspicious) doubtful matters. So who-ever forsakes those doubtful things lest he may commit a sin, will definitely avoid what is clearly illegal; and who-ever indulges in these (suspicious) doubtful things bravely, is likely to commit what is clearly illegal...” (Bukhari, Buyu’, 2)

Through shepherd and pasture metaphor, the Prophet (pbuh) eloquently depicts the danger of committing unlawful deeds because of getting too close to them. There are very nice examples about the Prophet’s avoidance the suspicious things in his own life. Once he found a fallen date on the road and said, *“Were it not for my doubt that this might have been given in charity, I would have eaten it.”* (Bukhari, Buyu’, 4; Muslim, Zakat, 164)

One of the special characteristics of the Prophet (pbuh) was that he would not accept charity and alms; because they were forbidden to him and his family.

We see that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did not eat the date he found on a road, thinking that it might have been one of the dates reserved for charity. This incident clearly shows that he meticulously stayed away from questionable things and personally lived according to the principles which he wanted to establish in his society. Another subtle point here is that our Prophet (pbuh) did not feel comfortable with wasting even a single date.

Lawful blessings of Allah the Almighty are endless. Not to be satisfied with them and tend towards the things which have the possibility to be unlawful is a behavior that does not fit with servitude to Allah.

On the other hand, trying to stay away from suspicious things should not lead to an unnecessary hesitation about its lawfulness. Such an attitude may cause hardship among believers.

A believer’s sound conscious can distinguish what is right and wrong, and what is doubtful and what is not. A believer should listen to the divine voice within himself/herself. The following incident is very significant in this regard:

Wabitha b. Ma’bad (r.a.) narrated:

“One day I was visiting the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He told me that:



“Have you come to ask what goodness is?” After I answered affirmatively, he continued:

*“Consult your heart. Goodness is what your heart sees appropriate and approves you to perform. Sin, on the other hand, is something which disturbs your heart and raises doubts in you even people give you fatwas^{*25} and tell you to do it.”* (Ibn Hanbal, IV, 227-228; Darimi, Buyu’, 2)

If a deed rouses unrest and if the doer of the deed does not want anybody to hear about it, it certainly is a questionable and ugly deed, which should be avoided. Indeed, many people would like their good deeds to be known and they would like that other people envy them. This is a measure which cannot be mistaken. Therefore, even the feeling of doubt about a deed, whether it is a sin or not, is enough reason to stay away from it. By using this measure a believer should give up the things which create inner discomfort.

By advising his companion to consult his heart, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) showed him that a heart, which is not blemished by sins and greed, can distinguish between right and wrong. This reality is also supported by the verse (Qur’an al-Zumar 39; 22) which states that one who has love for Islam in his/her chest carries a divine light bestowed by Allah the Almighty. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) persistently touched Wabitha’s chest and said *“Consult your heart! Ask your heart!”* Thus, he points out the fact that everyone knows their own problem better and he also tells us that if we have doubts about something, then we should immediately leave it.

The following incident experienced by ‘Uqba bin Al-Harith (r.a.) clearly shows us the Prophet’s attitude towards doubtful matters.

‘Uqba had married the daughter of Abi Ihab bin ‘Aziz. Later on a woman came to him and said, “I have nursed ‘Uqba and the woman whom he married at my breast.” ‘Uqba said to her, “Neither I knew that you have nursed me nor did you tell this to me before.” Then he went to see Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) in Medina, and asked him about it. Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said,

“How can you keep her as your wife, after you have been told that she is your milk-sister?”

Then ‘Uqba divorced her, and she married another man. (Bukhari, ‘Ilm, 26)

25. * A Legal Opinion



Islam prohibits the marriage of milk-brothers and sisters just like the marriage of real brothers and sisters. This is why couples who would like to get married should be careful and do research about it before getting married. They should stay away from suspicious situations. The Prophet's saying points out that being in continuous doubt would make people uneasy and it would be better to end such marriage and ease the heart. In this respect, the Prophet (pbuh) advises his followers and tries to keep them away from the unlawful saying:

دَعْ مَا يُرِيكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يُرِيكَ

"Leave the suspicious (doubtful) things for the things that are not suspicious." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 60)

The next hadith is also very important about showing the spiritual effects of staying away from doubtful things:

"A servant cannot attain the level of God-fearing believers unless he/she stays away from doubtful things because of the fear of committing unlawful deeds." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 60)

A Muslim's goal should be to be a God-fearing believer. In other words, he/she should try to reach the level of those who deeply revere Allah the Almighty, fear of losing His content, and leave this world after gaining His contentment. In order to reach this goal a Muslim must be very meticulous and careful in his/her actions. As it was stated by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) that a believer sometimes needs to stay away from things which may not look wrong at first glance because of the worry of falling into sins. Abu Bakr (r.a.) was one of the most careful companions of the Prophet (pbuh) in this regard. Aisha (r.a.) narrates that:

"Abu Bakr had a slave who used to give him some of his earnings. Abu Bakr used to eat from it. One day he brought something and Abu Bakr ate from it. The slave said to him,

"Do you know what this is?"

Abu Bakr then asked,

"What is it?" The slave said,



“Once, in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance I foretold somebody’s future though I did not have the knowledge of foretelling but I, cheated him, and when he met me, he gave me something for that service, and that is what you have eaten from.”

Then Abu Bakr put his hand in his mouth and vomited whatever was present in his stomach. (Bukhari, *Manaqib al-Anṣar*, 26)

A believer vehemently avoids committing unlawful deeds. He/she knows that putting unlawful food in his/her stomach or feeding his/her family with something unlawful is one of the greatest sins. He/she stays away from things which might be unlawful just like Abu Bakr (r.a.) did; because, he/she know very well that prayers and supplications, which are performed by the energy produced by unlawful food, will not be accepted.

Umar b. al-Khattab’s (r.a.) following behavior is a wonderful example of this. He fixed a grant of 4000 (Dirhams) for every Early Emigrant (i.e. Mu-hajir) and fixed a grant of 3500 (Dirhams) only for his son Abdullah b. Umar (may Allah be pleased with them). Somebody said to Umar, “Ibn Umar is also one of the Early Emigrants; why do you give him less than four-thousand?” ‘Umar replied, “His parents took him with them when they migrated, so he was not like the one who had migrated by himself. (Bukhari, *Manaqib al-Anṣar*, 45)

Here, we see how meticulous Umar was about the distribution of government property. Even though his son was one of the early emigrants, because he was with his parents during his migration, Umar assigned five hundred dirhams less to his son than he had assigned to the other early emigrants. In actuality, he could have treated him like the other emigrants because among them, too, there were those who migrated with their parents as well. However, Umar treated his son differently and gave him less than normal just because of his intention to stay away from doubtful things.

This kind of sensitivity towards doubtful things has continued to live through the friends of Allah. These eminent believers left wonderful memories for the following generations. Abu Hanifah, the Imam of Hanafi school, is one of them.

Abu Hanifah was a rich man, who gained his livelihood by trade. Because he was busy with Islamic sciences, he had an agent for his business while he only controlled the lawfulness of his business. He was so meticulous, in this



respect, that one day he sent his partner Hafs b. Abdurrahman to sell goods and told him:

“O Hafs! There are such and such defects in these goods. Do not forget to tell these defects to the buyers and sell them cheaper.”

Hafs sold the goods cheaper but he forgot to tell the defects. When Abu Hanifah learned this, he asked Hafs b. Abdurrahman:

“Do you know the buyer?” When Hafs replied negatively, he gave the entire thirty thousand dirham profit as charity because of his fear of mixing his lawful possessions with unlawful gains and broke his partnership.²⁶ His piety brought both material and spiritual blessings to his business.

In order to understand someone’s piety, sincerity, and purity of heart, we should look at the level of his/her soul and his/her meticulousness and efforts to stay away from questionable things.



26. Heytemî, Şehâbetin Ahmed Bin Hacer, *Imâm-I Âzam’ın Menkıbeleri*, Trans. Abdulvehhâb Öztürk, Ankara 1978, P. 82.



III. PROPHET'S LIFE OF WORSHIP

After faith, reverence and love for Allah, worship is the second most important issue in Islam, because worship is the main purpose for the creation of humans.

Worship means servitude, obedience, and submission. A general meaning of worship consists of the entire actions, words, feelings, and thoughts of a servant, which he/she performs, feels, or thinks about according to his/her Lord's Will. In other words, it denotes to be a servant before the Creator of the universe. The more specific meaning of the term "worship" denotes the acts of obedience performed in a specific way. In this chapter we will deal with the latter meaning.

Worship is the manifestation of gratitude for the blessings of Allah the Almighty and they are His rights on His servants. Worship and servitude are obligations, which must be performed with intentions of highest reverence, sincerity, and love for all-knowing and omnipotent Allah the Almighty. This obligation can be carried out through special remembrances, actions, and particular movements, which show our absolute servitude, obedience and submission to Allah. Acts of worship are principles, which must be followed in order to reach perfection. From this point of view, acts of worship are really for the benefit of the servant, because worship saves the servant from being stuck into a material world, and directs the sights and thoughts towards higher causes. A poet nicely expresses this:

Acts of obedience are for the discipline of your soul
If not, Allah needs neither obedience nor worship

The highest level of worship is to obey Allah sincerely and reverently and only for His contentment not for any other benefit. That is why worship is the spiritual manifestation of the combination of absolute weakness and absolute power. The conceited who are not aware of their weakness; the heedless who do not feel any fear or worry; and the pessimistic who have completely lost their hope are deprived of this honor. Since worship is the manifestation of





our soul and conscience, if it is performed according to the directions of our Prophet (pbuh), it plays an important role in protecting and strengthening the essence of our faith. Consciously fulfilled acts of worship also embellish our morals.

Prophet's (pbuh) life of worship began with the contemplation of the Creator of the universe. It was molded with ardent desire, submission, love, and yearning, and then was embellished with all kinds of beauties. During his days of seclusion in the cave of Hira, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) contemplated the creation and its absolute Judge. After he was honored with prophethood, he continued to perform his worship just as Allah the Most High taught him to do.

A. His Ritual Prayer

“...Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil...”

(al-Ankabut 29; 45)

1. His Ablution

The life of the Messenger of Allah was based on purity. Material cleanliness plays an important part in achieving spiritual purity and doing good deeds to attain the level of *ihsan*. In this respect, Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an **“...Allah loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.”** (al-Baqara 2; 222) The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) expresses the importance of purity saying:

“Cleanliness is half of faith.” (Muslim, Taharah, 1)

Allah the Most High wants His servants, who would like to come in His presence, to be clean from all kinds of material and spiritual impurity. This is why Allah has made ablution obligatory before some types of acts of worship, such as ritual prayers and circumambulation around Ka'bah. Muslim scholars have considered ablution a separate act of obedience because of its merits and significance. One of the reports about its merits is as follows:

‘Uqba b. ‘Amir reported:

“We were entrusted with the task of tending the camels. On my turn when I came back in the evening after grazing them in the pastures, I found Allah's



Messenger (pbuh) standing and addressing the people. I heard these words of his:

“If any Muslim performs ablution well, then stands and prays two rak’ahs, which he/she performs them with whole heart and soul, Paradise would be guaranteed to him.”

I said: What a fine thing is this! And someone who was standing before me said: The first was even better than this. When I cast a glance, I saw that it was ‘Umar. He continued his words: I see that you have just come. Just before you came here the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“If anyone amongst you performs the ablution, and then completes the ablution well and then says: I testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the servant of Allah and His Messenger, the eight gates of Paradise would be opened for him and he may enter by whichever of them he wishes.” (Muslim, Ṭaharah, 17)

Another incident about the merit is reported by Abu Huraira. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came to the graveyard and said:

“Peace be upon you O the residents of the abode of the believing people! If Allah so wills, we are about to join you. I love to see my brothers, and I have missed them so much.”

Companions said: Aren’t we your brothers, O Messenger of Allah? He said:

“You are my companions, and our brothers are those who have, so far, not come into the world.”

They said: O Messenger of Allah, how will you recognize those persons of your Ummah who have not yet been born? He said:

“Suppose a man had horses with white blazes on fore- heads and legs among horses which were all black, tell me, would he not recognize his own horses?”

They said: Certainly, O Messenger of Allah. And he said:

“They will come with white faces and arms and legs owing to ablution, and I will arrive at the Cistern before them and will be waiting for them.” (Muslim, Ṭaharah, 39)





Because purity is a distinguishing characteristic of the believers, their limbs that are cleansed for ablution will shine on the Day of Judgment, and thus they will be known that they are the followers of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Believers, who know this, have tried to perform their ablution well and they have the ablution water reach as many places as they can.

Abu Hazm reported:

I was (standing) behind Abu Huraira and he was performing the ablution for prayer. He extended the washing of his hand up to his armpit. I said to him:

“O Abu Huraira, what kind of ablution is this?” He said:

“O my friend Bani Farrukh, I did not know that you were here; if I knew, I would have never performed ablution like this. I have heard my Friend (pbuh) saying:

“On the day of Judgment, a believer’s adornment would reach the places where ablution water reaches.” (Muslim, Ṭaharah, 40)

Ablution is not only performed for worship. Islam encourages believers to perform ablution at other times and to always stay ritually pure; however, this not something that everyone can do. Only those who know the benefits and significance of ablution can succeed in this. This is why to always be pure is considered as a sign of faith and it is stated in the saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

“And only a believer is constant in his/her wuḍu or ablution.” (Ibn Majah, Ṭaharah, 4; Malik, *Muwatta*, Ṭaharah, 36)

There are several examples from the life of the Prophet (pbuh) in this respect. According to Abu Juha'im Al-Ansari's narration, once the Prophet was coming from the direction of Bi'r Jamal, when he met a man. The man greeted him, but he did not return back the greeting till he went to a (mud) wall and smeared his hands and his face with its dust (performed tayammum) and then returned back the greeting. (Bukhari, Tayammum, 3)

Ibn Abbah (r.a.) narrates:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) used to go out to the bathroom and when he was coming back, he would perform tayammum. When I told him:



“O Messenger of Allah! You were close to water, why did you perform tayammum?” He replied:

“I do not know. Maybe I give my soul, before I reach it.” (Ibn Hanbal, I, 288, 303; Haythami, I, 263)

Again when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) needed major ablution, he would perform tayammum until he performed major ablution, not to stay without ablution. (Haythami, I, 264)

As a result of the Prophet’s (pbuh) practice and encouragement, many believers try to perform ablution as soon as they need it, and they also refresh their ablution after a while. As a matter of fact Ottoman Sultan Abdulahmid II’s daughter narrated that her father used to keep a piece of brick under his bed, so when he woke up, he could perform tayammum until he went to the washroom.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) heralded the believers who refresh their ablution saying:

“Whoever refreshes his/her ablution, even when he/she is in ritual purity, Allah the Almighty writes ten times more reward for him/her.” (Tirmidhi, Taharah, 44)

There are many prophetic sayings about the merits of ablution. Since it is impossible to mention all of them here, we would like to state one last hadith, which is about both the wisdom and merits of ablution.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“None of you who uses water for ablution and rinses his mouth, snuffs up water and blows it, but the sins of his face, and his mouth and his nostrils fall out. When he washes his face, as Allah has commanded him, the sins of his face fall from the end of his beard with water. Then (when) he washes his forearms up to the elbows, the sins of his arms fall out along with water from his finger-tips. And when he wipes his head, the sins of his head fall out from the points of his hair along with water. And (when) he washes his feet up to the ankles, the sins of his feet fall out from his toes along with water. And if he stands to pray and praises Allah, lauds Him and glorifies Him with what becomes Him and shows wholehearted devotion to Allah, his sins would depart





leaving him (as innocent) as he was on the day his mother bore him.” (Muslim, Musafirun, 294)

In this saying, ears and neck were not mentioned, but it is stated in the books of Islamic law that after rinsing the head, it is Sunnah to rinse the inner and outer parts of the ears and then the neck.

People cannot achieve the true purity, if they do not completely turn to Allah, and if they do not make every effort to purify their hearts and souls. This is why some special supplications and remembrances are suggested to be recited during the performance of ablution. The achievement of inner purity is also connected with these special prayers. Therefore, reciting these special prayers and intending to get spiritually purified are as important as washing the limbs thoroughly. A peaceful ablution can be performed only by reciting these prayers.

Another point which the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) momentarily stated is to brush the teeth with a small stick from the miswaq tree. Even though our beloved Prophet (pbuh) frequently brushed his teeth, he strongly suggested and emphasized brushing one's teeth during ablution. He said that *“If I had not found it hard for my followers, I would have ordered them to clean their teeth with Siwak for every prayer.”* (Bukhari, Jum'a, 8) In another hadith, the Prophet (pbuh) said that *“Miswaq is a means of cleaning one's mouth and a reason for earning the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.”* (Nasai, Taharah, 5) Thus, he pointed out the wisdom behind attaching so much significance to brushing the teeth.

2. His Ritual Prayer

Muslims' prayer is the best and most perfect manifestation of servitude. It is the most significant act of worship and the most beneficial to humanity. This is why Allah the Almighty repeatedly pointed out its merits and announced it as the greatest sign of religion. And Allah's Apostle (pbuh) set its times, conditions, elements, concessions, manners, and its supererogatory acts in every detail.

Prayer consists of the following three essentials of servitude:

- Heart gets filled with reverence through contemplation of Allah's Might and Majesty
- Tongue clearly states His Might and this reverence



– Limbs act in accordance with the reverence in the heart; they stand respectfully before the Divine presence, bend down from the waist, and then prostrate. In this act of worship, all limbs, beginning from the heart and tongue, present their submission and respect to Allah in unison. How wonderfully a poet expresses this in the following lines:

أَفَادَتْكُمْ النِّعَمَاءُ مِنِّي ثَلَاثَةٌ يَدَيَّ وَلِسَانِي وَالضَّمِيرُ الْمُحَجَّبَا

There exist three things enumerating the blessings given to me:
My hands, my tongue, and my heart hidden (from eyes) ...

The most perfect prayer, which is the peak of respect and servitude to Allah the Almighty, was performed by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He told his ummah “*Pray as you have seen me praying*” (Bukhari, Adhan, 18) and commanded them to follow him. This is why we should first know how the Prophet (pbuh) performed his prayers and how much attention he paid to his prayers.

Below is a two-*rak’ah*²⁷ prayer of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

When he wanted to pray, he would first turn to *Qiblah* or to the direction of Ka’bah. He would raise his hands up to his earlobes and say “Allahu Akbar – Allah is the Greatest.” He would put his right hand over his left hand and tie them below his navel. Then he would commence his ritual prayer with the supplication of “*subhanaka*.” After that he would recite the chapter “*Fatiha*” from the Qur’an and say “*amin*” quietly at the end of his recitation. He also advised the believers to do the same and say “*amin*” at the end of “*Fatihah*.”

After reciting some additional verses from the Qur’an, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would bend down from the waist saying “Allahu Akbar,” and put his palms on his knees. He would say silently “*subhana rabbiyal azim*” three times, and then straighten back up saying “*samiallahu liman hamidah*”, and then would say “*rabbana laka’l hamd*”. While going down to *sajdah* or prostration, he would say “*Allahu Akbar*.” During prostration, he neither would spread his arms to the ground nor stick them to his body. He would hold his feet standing and his toes would face towards the Qiblah. He would silently say “*subhana rabbiyal ‘ala*” three times in the position of prostration.

27. A *rak’ah* is a cycle or a unit of repeated movements in Muslims’ prayer





He would raise his head from *sajda* saying “*Allahu Akbar*,” sit down on his knees and pause briefly in this position, and then prostrate down for the second *sajda* saying “*Allahu Akbar*.” After *sajda*, he would stand up for the second *rak’ah* of the prayer saying “*Allahu Akbar*.” He would perform the second *rak’ah* just like the first one. After performing two *sajdas*, he would sit down and put his palms on his thighs and recite the supplications of “*Ta-hiyyat, Allahumma Salli* and *Allahumma Barik*.” Following these prescribed supplications, he allows believers to make whichever supplication they wish. He would conclude his ritual prayer by turning his face first to his right then to his left and say “*as-salamu alaikum wa rahmatullah*.” After the completion of the canonical prayer, he would say some other prayers and remembrances.

After the recitation of Fatihah, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) usually recited the eighty first (*surah al-Takwir*), fiftieth (*surah Qaf*), thirty sixth (*surah Ya-sin*), and fifty sixth (*surah al-Waqi’ah*) chapters of the Qur’an at dawn prayer. However, on Fridays he usually recited the thirty second (*surah al-Sajda*) and seventy sixth (*surah al-Insan*) chapters of the Qur’an at dawn prayer. At dawn prayer, he used to recite more verses in the first *rak’ah* than the second. At noon and afternoon prayers, he usually recited short chapters of the Qur’an, such as the ninety eight (*surah al-Layl*), eighty fifth (*surah al-Buruj*), eighty sixth (*surah al-Tariq*), and etc. For the evening prayers, he sometimes recited the fifty second (*surah Tur*) and seventy seventh (*surah al-Mursalat*) chapters of the Qur’an. According to reports, he even recited *surah al-Mursalat* at his last evening prayer which he led the congregation.

Once when Abdullah b. Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) recited the *surah al-Mursalat* in the evening prayer, his mother Ummu’l Fadl said: “My dear son! By reciting this chapter, you stirred up my longing for the Prophet (pbuh); because I heard the Prophet reciting *Surah al-Mursalat* (77) in the Maghrib prayer, and after that prayer he did not lead us in any prayer till he died.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 98)

There were times when the Prophet (pbuh) recited *surah al-Kafirun* (109) in the first *rak’ah* of the evening prayer and *surah al-Ikhlās* (112) in its second *rak’ah*. In the night prayer, he would recite chapters like *surah al-Duha* (93), *al-Tin* (95), *al-Munafiqun* (63), *al-A’la* (87), *al-Layl* (92), and *al-Alaq* (96) among others. Once he recited the *surah al-Inshiqāq* (84) in his night prayer and when he recited the prostration verse, he went down to prostrate.



In his Witr prayer, he used to recite surah al-A'la (87) in the first rak'ah, surah al-Kafirun (109) in the second and surah al-Ikhlāṣ (112) in the last rak'ah. As soon as he finished his prayer by greeting to his right and left, he used to say "*Subhana'l Maliki'l Quddus*" three times and increase his voice and prolong for the third one. (M. Asım Köksal, VIII, 93-97)

a. His Attention to Prayer

Allah's Apostle (pbuh) made ritual prayer, which he called "the light of his eyes," the essence of his life. He performed supererogatory prayers, whenever he had the chance. For instance he performed prayers, when he was happy; or when he wanted to show his gratitude to Allah; or when something made him sad, he would go to prayer to find consolation. (Abu Dawud, Tatawwu, 22; Jihad, 162) He never made concessions about prayer. He also did not allow the new converts to be negligent about their prayers and told them that there was no Islam without prayer. In this respect, the following report attracts our attention:

"When the deputation of Thaḳif came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he made them stay in the mosque, so that it might soften their hearts. They stipulated to him that they would not be called to participate in Jihad, to pay zakat and to offer prayer. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) said: *You may have the concession that you will not be called to participate in jihad and pay zakat, but there is no good in a religion which has no bowing (i.e. prayer).*" (Abu Dawud, Haraj, 25-26)

In other words, whatever the circumstances are, believers should not postpone their prayers; they should even perform it in congregation. Believers should also be attentive to their prayers when they have the power. This is stated in the following verse:

"(They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, keep up prayer and pay the poor-due, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong: With Allah rests the end (And decision) of (all) affairs." (al-Hajj 22; 41)

In this way Allah the Almighty reminds us that struggle in the way of Allah and having power to rule are just means, but prayer is the believers' main object in this world. In order to achieve this divine object, a believer must face all kinds of troubles. Abu'd Darda (r.a.) narrates:





My friend (pbuh) gave me the following advices:

“Even if you were torn into pieces or burn in fires, never attribute partners to Allah. Do not leave any of your prayers. Whoever intentionally ceases to perform his/her prayer, he/she will be away from Allah’s protection ...” (Ibn Majah, Fitan, 23)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was not content with only performing obligatory prayers during a battle; he would stay up all night praying in the divine presence. In fact, Ali (r.a.) said in describing the battle of Badr that:

“On the day of Badr, there was no cavalry among us except Miqdad. I know it well that all of us slept that night except the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He stayed awake all night and shed tears and prayed under a tree.” (Ibn Huzaymah, II, 52)

Allah’s Apostle’s love and loyalty to Allah the Almighty reached such a level that he was finding peace and tranquility only through worshipping Him. When he was distressed by the matters of this world, he asked Bilal to recite the adhan and found comfort in the adhan and prayer. When the prayer time came, he would leave everything and go to perform prayer.²⁸ All his life, he always performed his prayers at their earliest time. As a matter of fact, the Prophet loved to pray wherever the time for the prayer was due even at sheep-folds (Bukhari, Salat, 48), because Allah the Almighty counts the quality of postponing prayers among the attributes of hypocrites and states that:

“The hypocrites they think they are over reaching Allah, but He will over reach them: when they stand up to prayer, they stand without earnestness, to be seen of men, but little do they hold Allah in remembrance.” (al-Nisa 4; 142)

“So woe to the worshippers who are neglectful of their prayers.” (al-Maun 107; 4-5)

Turkish exegete Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır makes the following commentary about these verses:

28. “Once Allah’s Apostle was eating a piece of meat from the shoulder of a sheep and he was called for the prayer. He stood up, put down the knife and prayed but did not perform ablution.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 43) This incident shows us that the Prophet (pbuh) left his meal and went to perform his prayer; even though he had the option to postpone it for a later time, he did not postpone it and performed it as soon as its time was due.



“They are unaware of the significance of the prayer, so they do not perform it like a serious duty.

They do not care if the prayer was performed or not.

They do not pay attention to its time; they postpone it and do not check if its time has already passed.

They do not become sad for not performing it.

When they perform their prayers, they do not perform it for the sake of Allah but they do it for worldly objects.

They perform their prayers openly but do not perform it secretly; they do not perform it reverently like they are in the presence of their Lord, but they perform it to show-off to other people.” (*Hak Dini Kur’ân Dili*, IX, 6168) If our Lord says “woe” to those who recklessly perform their prayers, think about what He would say to those who do not perform it!

This is why Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not like to postpone the prayers to later times and said that:

“There exists contentment of Allah in the early times of the prayer and His forgiveness in its later times.” (Tirmidhi, Salat, 13) In other words, Allah the Almighty is content with His servants who perform their prayers as soon as possible, and will forgive those who make the mistake of postponing it to its later times.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did not let his prayers pass even at the worst stages of his sickness. Even though his sickness was very severe and he did not have any strength left in his body, he went to the mosque to perform noon and afternoon prayers in congregation with the help of two of his companions. After the prayer, he did not refrain from reminding his companions the matters that were beneficial to them. His last words were *“Prayer, prayer; fear Allah about those whom your right hands possess.”* (Abu Dawud, Adab, 123-124/5156)

Anas (r.a.) narrates:

“We were with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) when he was dying. He told us three times:

“Fear Allah about your prayers.” And he continued:





“Fear Allah about the people who work for you; Fear Allah about two weak people, i.e. widow and orphan child. Fear Allah about your prayers...”

Then the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) began saying repeatedly *“prayer; prayer ...”* until his blessed soul ascended to the Almighty Friend.” (Bayhaqi, Shuab, VII, 477. See also Ahmad, VI, 290, 315; Ibn Majah, Waṣaya, 1)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) also wanted that every believer should perform their prayers in the best way. Once Abdullah b. Rawaha was getting ready for the expedition to Mu’tah and he went to the Prophet (pbuh) to say his farewell. He said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Advise me something that I can memorize and never forget.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told him:

“You will go to a country where people prostrate very little to Allah the Almighty. Increase their prayer and prostration ...” (Waqidi, II, 758)

The Prophet (pbuh) was also very sensitive about getting children accustomed to prayer starting at a very young age. He asked his followers to advice their seven year old children to pray; and to be very serious about prayers when they reach ten; because Allah the Almighty enjoined that:

“Enjoin prayer on your people, and be constant therein. We ask you not to provide Sustenance: we provide it for you. But the (fruit of) the Hereafter is for Righteousness.” (Taha 20; 132)

Throughout Islamic history, the believers who comprehended the Prophet’s sensitivity about prayers have given a special importance to prayer. Ottoman Sultan Mehmet Resad VI’s first order to Lady Safiyah, the teacher of children in the palace was that:

“I want the lady teacher to tell the young prince and princesses that I do not forgive those who do not pay appropriate attention to their prayers and fasting.” (Safiye Ünüvar, *Saray Hatıralarım*, p. 21)

b. Reverence and Tranquility in His Prayer

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was in deep reverence, rapture, and contemplation when performing his prayers. He would perform his prayers in consciousness that he was in the presence of his Lord and with reverence and awe resulting from this consciousness. Just like when a person becomes hap-



py when he/she sees someone whom he/she loves, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would become very happy when he was going to the presence of Allah the Almighty, i.e. performing prayers.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would reach the peak of modesty and pious reverence towards his Lord during his prayers. He would get a completely different joy from appealing and praying to Him.

One of the most significant issues of ritual prayer is undoubtedly the state of pious reverence, which means that the heart is filled with fear of Allah and all limbs in the body are in a state of satisfaction and tranquility. It means to concentrate and keep the eyes on the place of prayer, and to turn away everything other than Allah and to not give any attention to unnecessary matters.

Abdullah b. Shihhir (r.a.) depicts the reverence of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as follows:

"Once I went to the Prophet (pbuh). He was praying and crying; and voices, like a boiling pot, were coming out of his chest." (Abu Dawud, Salat, 158)

A prayer performed in complete reverence with body, heart, and tongue and in contemplation of being in the presence of Allah is an important means to attain Allah's mercy and love. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) expressed the necessity of reverence and contemplation in performing prayer in his following saying:

"Prayer is performed in twos. In every two rak'ahs, there is a sitting (tashahhud). Prayer is the manifestation of reverence, modesty, and submission. (After finishing it) You raise your hands and ask forgiveness from your Lord saying Dear Lord! Dear Lord Dear Lord! Whoever cannot do this, his/her prayer is incomplete." (Tirmidhi, Salat, 166) In other words, prayer is a servant's realization of his weakness, the presentation of his destitute to his Creator, and the humble begging and asking for needs from the Lord.

When the Messenger of Allah led a prayer, he would not prolong it by thinking of the old and sick as well as members of the congregation who might have some urgent work to do. When he heard a baby crying in the congregation, he would even hasten his prayer thinking that his/her mother might be in the congregation; but when he performed solitary midnight (*tahajjud*) prayer, he prolonged it as much as he wanted, for there was no congregation to consider. He advised his followers that prayers with longer duration of standing





(qiyam) were more virtuous. (Muslim, Musarifun, 165) This is why Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prolonged his solitary prayers and enjoyed being in the presence of our Lord as much as he wished. Hudhaifa (r.a.) reported:

“I prayed with the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) one night and he started reciting al-Baqara. I thought that he would bow at the end of one hundred verses, but he proceeded on; I then thought that he would perhaps recite the whole (surah) in a rak'ah, but he proceeded and I thought he would perhaps bow on completing (this surah). He then started al-Nisa', and recited it; he then started Al-i-'Imran and recited leisurely. And when he recited the verses which referred to the Glory of Allah, he glorified (by saying Subhan Allah-Glory to my Lord the Great), and when he recited the verses which tell (how the Lord) is to be begged, he (the Holy Prophet) would then beg (from Him), and when he recited the verses dealing with protection from the Lord, he sought (His) protection and would then bow and say: Glory be to my Mighty Lord; his bowing lasted about the same length of time as his standing (and then on returning to the standing posture after ruku') he would say: Allah listened to him who praised Him, and he would then stand about the same length of time as he had spent in bowing. He would then prostrate himself and say: Glory be to my Lord most High, and his prostration lasted nearly the same length of time as his standing.” (Muslim, Musafirun, 203)

Prayer is to move away from worldly matters and in a way it means to be like the angels. This state can be achieved only by performing prayers regularly and greatly. In order to achieve this goal, one must pray and soften his/her heart in every chance he/she gets. With such practices, a believer gets rid of the spiritual burdens over him/her and begins to perform prayers easily. In this way, it would be possible to sustain the state of reverence and tranquility even after the prayer.

Being able to spread the prayer to the entire time and to sustain a spiritual state of a prayer after finishing it is one of the most rewarding acts of worship. Allah the Most High praises the believers with the following attributes:

“Those who remain steadfast to their prayer” (al-Maarij 70; 23)

Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) describes the prayer which can take the servant to Allah and the state of those who protect such spiritual state in other times of the day as follows:



“The (ritual) prayer is five times (daily), but the guide for lovers is (the Verse), (they who are) in prayer continually. The wine-headache that is in those heads is not relieved by five (times) nor by five hundred thousand. “Visit once a week” is not the ration for lovers; the soul of the sincere (lovers) has an intense craving to drink. “Visit once a week” is not the ration for (those) fishes, since they feel no spiritual joy without the Sea. Notwithstanding the crop-sickness of the fishes, the water of this Sea, which is a tremendous place, is but a single draught (too little to satisfy them). To the lover one moment of separation is as a year; to him a (whole) year’s uninterrupted union is a (fleeing) fancy.” (Mathnawi, VI, verses: 2669-74)

Muhammad Parsa (q.s.) describes the attention that the friends of Allah give to prayer as follows: “For a Sufi, who is adorned with the light of remembrance and has reached the final stations of spiritual path, prayer is the most virtuous daily duty and the most perfect act of obedience, for prayer is the most perfect act of worship which consists of all the other acts of worship.”

c. Rewards for Performing Prayers

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) regarded canonical prayer very significant and defined it as the best act of worship. In one of his sayings, he (pbuh) stated the significance of the prayer as follows:

“Try to go straight, although you will not be able to do so. Act, and the best of your actions is the prayer...” (Malik, Muwaṭṭa, Ṭaharah, 6)

Allah the Almighty has also stated that He will give many more rewards to those who complete prayer. Anas (r.a.) narrates that Allah the Almighty had commanded the Messenger of Allah to pray fifty times a day on the ascension night. Then He reduced it to five. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was told that night that:

“O Muhammad! This is the ruling and (it has become definite) it will not be changed. There are five prayers every day and night. O Muhammad, each being credited as ten, so that makes fifty prayers.” (Muslim, Iman, 259)

Allah the Almighty’s emphasis on prayer requires that we should pay more attention to our prayers. This is why every single rak’ah that is performed is really valuable. How nicely our Prophet (pbuh) explains this fact in the coming incident. Abu Hurairah (r.a.) narrates:





“Two people from Kudaa tribe’s Baliyy clan converted to Islam together during Prophet’s time. Later one of them was martyred and the other one died a year later. Talha b. Ubaydullah said that “I saw in my dream that the one who died a year later entered Paradise before the one who got martyred and I was astonished.” In the morning Talha’s dream was told to the Prophet (pbuh). After he listened to the dream, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) gave them the following answer that shows the reward of acts of worship, especially prayers:

“Did not he have the chance to fast and perform about six thousand rak’ahs of prayer after the death of his martyr brother? (It is normal to be a difference between them)” (Ibn Hanbal, II, 333)

Prayer, the most significant act of worship, will be the reason to obtain many spiritual rewards and protect a believer from evil. Allah the Almighty expresses in the Qur’an that:

“Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and keep up prayer; surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knows what you do.” (al-Ankabut 29; 45)

Prayer assembles qualities in it, like spiritual purity and pious reverence, which are required for eternal happiness; and it advances the servant up the stations of spirituality. When a human being attains a good attribute, he/she develops an attitude towards opposite qualities of evil attributes. Whoever performs his/her prayers properly; makes the ablution required for prayer; observes its obligatory times; bends, prostrates, and completes it in reverence and remembrances and observes all of its rules; he/she certainly opposes the evil, dives into mercy and attains the forgiveness of Allah the Almighty.

One day when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was waiting for the prayer time, a man stood up and said:

“O Messenger of Allah! I have sinned.” Allah’s Apostle did not respond. After the prayer, the same man stood up and repeated his words. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) asked him:

“Have not you just prayed with us? And have not you nicely made your ablution?” The man replied:



“Yes, O Messenger of Allah!” Upon this answer, The Prophet (pbuh) told him:

“Your prayer will be an atonement for your sin.” (Haythami, I, 301)

How nicely Rumi (q.s.) explains:

“Allah the Most Gracious is hidden in the prayer. He bestows His bounty and blessings to the one who is pious and performs his/her prayers; (but) the (Divine) Forgiveness bestows a robe of honor (even) in (the case of) sin so that sin becomes a reason for forgiveness, bounty, and blessings.” (Mathnawi, VI, verse: 4345)

In Rumi’s above-mentioned lines, there is a reference to the following Qur’anic verses:

“... For surely good deeds take away evil deeds...” (Hud 11; 114)

فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَبِيلَهُمْ حَسَنَاتٍ

“Save him who repents and believes and does righteous work; as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.” (al-Furqan 25; 70)

In order to obtain the expected results from our prayers, we need to perform it like the Prophet (pbuh) did. There are many good inspirations in the prayers which are performed according to its prescribed rules and in the Fatihas recited in our prayers. Thus, spiritual light occurs in the eyes and bliss in the heart. Such a prayer is the shortest path to ascend to the state of *ihsan* or to be a servant who is always aware that he/she was in the presence of Allah. As a result of this, he/she thinks about his/her Creator in all of his/her actions, words, and thoughts and becomes a perfect believer. Otherwise, if prayer is not performed like the Prophet (pbuh) did, it cannot make any changes in a believer’s life and he/she may slip into swamps of sins and evil. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) depicts this situation as follows:

“O soul, in the first place look for solution to avert the mischief of the mouse, and then show fervor (zeal) in garnering the grain. Remember one of the sayings related from the Prophet (pbuh) who is the Chief of the Chiefs and soul of the souls: “No prayer is complete without ‘presence’ (concentration of the mind on Allah)” and begin to perform your prayers with a serenity of



heart in order to be saved from self and Satan. If there is no thievish mouse in our barn, where is the corn of forty years' works (of devotion)? Why is the daily sincerity (of our devotions) not being stored, bit by bit, in this barn of ours? Many a star (spark) of fire shot forth from the iron (of good works), and that burning heart received (it) and drew (it) in. But the thief extinguished the fire so as there will be no light in the heart of the believer." (Mathnawi, I, verses: 380-85)

Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) knew how attentive the Prophet (pbuh) was about the prayer. For this reason, when they would begin to perform their prayers, they would feel closer to Allah. The following instance is an example that shows us how their prayers were:

"We proceeded in the company of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) for the battle of Dhat ar-Riqa. One of the Muslims killed the wife of one of the unbelievers. He (the husband of the woman killed) took an oath saying: I shall not rest until I kill one of the companions of Muhammad.

He went out following the footsteps of the Prophet (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) encamped at a certain place. He said: Who will keep a watch on us? Ammar b. Yasir and Abbad b. Bishr (may Allah be pleased with them) responded. He said: Go to the entrance of the mountain-pass. When they went there, Ammar preferred to lie down while Abbad stood to perform prayer.

The man (enemy) came to them. When he saw Abbad (r.a.) he realized that he was the watchman of the Muslims. He shot him with an arrow and hit the target. But Abbad took the arrow out and threw it away. He (the enemy) then shot three more arrows. Abbad (r.a.) awoke his companion, after he bowed down and prostrated. When he (the enemy) perceived that the believers had become aware of his presence, he ran away.

When Ammar (r.a.) saw Abbad (r.a.) bleeding, he asked him: Glory be to Allah! Why did you not wake me up the first time when he shot at you?

He replied: I was busy reciting a chapter of the Qur'an. I did not like to leave it. But because enemy's arrows were coming continuously, I was forced to finish my prayer rapidly. By Allah, if I was not afraid to lose this place, which Allah's Messenger (pbuh) ordered us to protect, I would prefer to die than to finish my prayer. (Abu Dawud, Ṭaharah, 78; Ibn Ḥanbal, III, 343-44)

The main motivation to present such wonderful meritorious deeds was the companions' love for Allah and His Messenger (pbuh).

Miswar b. Mahramah (r.a.) tells the following incident stating the companions' attention to ritual prayer:

"I went to Umar b. al-Khattab, when he got stabbed. He was covered with a blanket and was lying unconsciously. I asked the people with him:

"How is he?" They replied:

"Just like you see, he is not very good."

I told them:

"Call him to prayer. You cannot wake him up with anything but calling him to prayer." They told Umar (r.a.):

"O leader of the believers! Prayer!" Umar (r.a.) immediately stood up and said:

"By Allah, those who quit praying have no share from faith." Then he performed his prayer with blood pouring from his wound." (Haythami, I, 295. See also Ibn Sa'd, III, 35; *Muwatta*, Taharah, 51)

For the companions of the Prophet (pbuh), Allah's commands were above everything else. Property and lives were nothing for them compared to Divine orders. All the members of the community were in realization of the fact that prayer constituted the center of the life of worship.

There have been believers among the generations after them, who share a similar consciousness of the companions. One of them was Sheikh Shamil, the famous Caucasian warrior. He was stabbed and wounded about a dozen times during the Gimri defense in 1829. One of his wounds was caused by a bayonet, which went through his chest, pierced his liver, and got out of his back. He also had several broken ribs and bones in his body. With the help of his surgeon uncle, it took six months for him to get well. After he got wounded, he stayed in a coma for twenty five days. When he woke up from his twenty-five-day coma, he found his mother next to his bed. His first words to his mother were:

"Dear Mother! Have I missed the prayer time?" (İbrahim Refik, *Efsâne Soluklar*, p. 78)





Companions tried to live Islam just like the way they saw from the Prophet (pbuh). This was how the Prophet (pbuh) performed his prayers and this was how those who follow his blessed footsteps...

3. The Significance of Congregational Prayer

“There is no prayer for the neighbor of the mosque
(It will not be a complete prayer) except in the
mosque”

(Saying of the Prophet (pbuh) reported by Ibn Abi Shaybah)

Performing some acts of worship in congregation and having people from all levels of society participate in their performance consists of several social and individual benefits. Just like the existence of righteous people who deserve to be followed, there are also weak people in our society who need guidance and encouragement to ascend the steps of spirituality. The latter type of people may show negligence if they do not feel the pressure to perform some of their obligations in front of other people. This is why performing an act of worship in congregation, such as prayer which is obligatory to every believer, is one of the most beneficial acts of obedience. And this is why it should be performed in congregation and popularized in society. Thus, those who perform it and those who do not can be distinguished; those who have the knowledge can be followed and those do not have the enough knowledge can learn. Worshipping Allah in congregation is kind of a measurement to find out the good and bad servants of Allah.

On the other hand, Allah’s request is to keep Islam as the greatest religion in this world. This goal can only be achieved by gathering people frequently from all levels of society, such as scholars and the ignorant, city dwellers and peasants, young and old for congregational prayer, since this is the greatest sign and the most common act of worship of Islam. In addition, to encourage people to achieve this goal, Allah the Almighty gives more rewards for prayers performed in congregation. This is stated by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) as follows:

“Allah’s Apostle said, “The prayer in congregation is twenty seven times superior to the prayer offered by person alone.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 30)



Praying and repenting together also have a great effect on the acceptability of the supplications. Therefore, supplications done during the performance of a ritual prayer will be accepted faster.

“No believer does his ablution, does it well, then heads towards one of the mosques without Allah recording a blessing for him for every step he takes raising him a degree for it, and effacing a sin from him for it; this way Allah’s mercy and presence surrounds him.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 30; Muslim, Masajid, 272)

Again the Prophet (pbuh) said, *“Allah will prepare for him who goes to the mosque (every) morning and in the afternoon (for the congregational prayer) an honorable place in Paradise with good hospitality for (what he has done) every morning and afternoon goings.”* (Bukhari, Adhan, 37) These prophetic sayings describe the beauty and abundance of the blessings waiting for the believers who continue the congregational prayer five times a day. Sheikh Uftadah (q.s.) points out the lofty and honorable place of the congregation in the presence of Allah in his following lines in which he addresses to Ulu Mosque:²⁹

يَا جَامِعَ الْكَبِيرِ وَيَا مَجْمَعَ الْكِبَارِ طُوبَى لِمَنْ يَزُورُكَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ

“O grand Mosque! O sacred place in which great people come together! How happy those who visit you five times day and night are!”

As their leader, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would check the attendees of the congregation and ask about those who were not present. During those days, only the hypocrites and very sick would not attend the dawn and night prayers. Ubay b. Ka’b narrates:

“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) led us in the dawn prayer one day. And he said: Is so and so present? They said: No. He (again) asked: Is so and so present? They replied: No. He then said:

“These two prayers are the ones which are most burdensome to hypocrites. If you knew what they contain (i.e. blessings), you would come to them, even if you had to crawl on your knees. The first row is like that of the angels, and if you knew the nature of its excellence, you would race to join it. A man’s

29. This is the grand mosque built by the orders of Ottoman Sultan Bayazid I between 1396 and 1400 in the city of Bursa.





prayer said along with another is purer than his prayer said alone, and his prayer with two men is purer than his prayer with one, but if there are more it is more pleasing to Allah, the Almighty, the Majestic.” (Abu Dawud, Salat, 47)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) presented the best example to his ummah about continuing the congregation. He attended the congregation with the help of his two friends until the day he passed away. Aswad (r.a.) narrates that:

“We were with Aisha (r.a.) and we talked about continuing and showing respect to the prayer. Then she told us:

“When Allah’s Apostle fell sick with the fatal illness and when the time of prayer became due and Adhaan was recited, he said, ‘Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer.’ He was told that Abu Bakr was a soft-hearted man and would not be able to lead the prayer in his place. The Prophet gave the same order again but he was given the same reply. He gave the order for the third time and said, ‘You (women) are the companions of Joseph. Tell Abu Bakr to lead the prayer.’ So Abu Bakr came out to lead the prayer. In the meantime the condition of the Prophet improved a bit and he came out with the help of two men, one on each side. As if I was observing his legs dragging on the ground owing to the disease. Abu Bakr wanted to retreat but the Prophet beckoned him to remain at his place and the Prophet was brought till he sat beside Abu Bakr.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 39) Given that, he (pbuh) said:

لَا صَلَاةَ لِجَارِ الْمَسْجِدِ إِلَّا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ

“There is no prayer for the neighbor of the mosque (it will not be a complete prayer) except in the mosque” (Ibn Abi Shaybah, I, 303)

When Ali (r.a.) was asked about who the neighbor of the mosque was, he said:

“They are those who hear the muadhdhin.” (Bayhaqi, *Al-Sunan al-Kubra*, III, 57)

Those who hear the voice of muadhdhin should go to the congregation; it does not matter whether they live far or near it. Only those who have disabilities are excluded from this rule. Allah the Almighty has promised rewards for every step of those who go to the mosque. Therefore, it means the further the distance the more the reward. The master of the universe, the Prophet (pbuh) said, “*The people who get tremendous reward for the prayer are those who*



are farthest away (from the mosque) and then those who are next farthest and so on. Similarly one who waits to pray with the Imam has greater reward than one who prays and goes to bed.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 31)

On the other hand, regularly going to the mosque and making it a habit is regarded as a sign of real believers (Tirmidhi, Iman, 8) and such a good habit is also considered to be like the reconstruction of the mosques. Only those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, who perform prayers, give alms, and do not fear anything other than Allah can perform this deed. Being on the straight path and not moving away from this blessing can be realized only through such good deeds. (al-Tawbah 9; 18)

Those who push all those rewards away by choosing not to join the congregation not only harm Islam, but also commit the greatest oppression. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) says in regards to the grievous fate of those who do not join the congregation that:

“If there are three men in a village or in the desert among whom prayer is not offered (in congregation), the devil has got the mastery over them. So observe (prayer) in congregation, for the wolf eats only the straggling animal.” (Abu Dawud, Salat, 46)

In this prophetic saying there is also implication that quitting congregation may lead to quitting prayer completely. This is why excuses presented for not attending congregation are not accepted. Abdullah b. Ummu Maktum, who was a blind man, came to the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah, I have no one to guide me to the mosque.” He, therefore, asked the permission of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) to perform his prayers in his house. The Prophet (pbuh) first granted him permission. Then, when the man turned away he called him and said:

“Do you hear the call to prayer?”

He said: Yes.

The Holy Prophet then told him:

“Then you should respond to adhaan and come to the mosque.” (Muslim, Masajid, 255)

The Prophet (pbuh) paid so much attention to the congregation that he did not like that his followers pray alone. Abu Sa’id al-Hudri (r.a.) narrates:





“A man came to the mosque, but the Prophet (pbuh) had already finished his prayer. Then Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“Who would like to give this man charity and get its reward?” immediately someone stood up and prayed with him.” (Tirmidhi, Salat, 50)

A companion who had already performed his obligatory prayer with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stood up and re-performed his prayer just to help his brother to get the reward of congregation.

Narrated by Yazid ibn Amir (r.a.):

I came while the Prophet (pbuh) was performing the prayer. I sat down and did not pray along with them. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) turned towards us and saw that Yazid was sitting there. He said:

“Did you not embrace Islam, Yazid?”

He replied:

“I have, O Apostle of Allah; I have embraced Islam.”

Then the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“What prevented you from performing prayer along with the people?”

He replied:

“I have already prayed in my house, and I thought that you had prayed (in congregation).”

He said:

“When you come to pray (in the mosque) and find the people praying, then you should pray along with them, even though you have already prayed. This will be a supererogatory prayer for you and that will be counted as obligatory.” (Abu Dawud, Salat, 56)

Abdullah b. Mas’ud (r.a.) reported:

“He who likes to meet Allah tomorrow as Muslim, he should persevere in observing these prayers, when a call is announced for them, for Allah has laid down for your Prophet the paths of right guidance, and these (prayers) are among the paths of right guidance. If you were to pray in your houses as this man who stays away (from the mosque) prays in his house, you would



abandon the practice of your Prophet, and if you were to abandon the practice of your Prophet, you would go astray. No man purifies himself, doing it well, and then makes for one of those mosques without Allah recording a blessing for him for every step he takes, raising him a degree for it, and effacing a sin from him for it. I have seen the time when no one stayed away from it, except a hypocrite, who was well known for his hypocrisy, whereas a man would be brought swaying (due to sickness) between two men till he was set up in a row.” (Muslim, Masajid, 256-57)

Because those who do not attend the congregation are warned by Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) as follows: *“By Him in Whose Hands my life is, I was about to order for collecting fire wood and then order someone to pronounce the Adhan for the prayer and then order someone to lead the people in prayer and then I would go from behind and burn the houses of men who did not present themselves for the (compulsory congregational) prayer.”*³⁰ *By Him in Whose Hands my life is, some of those who do not attend the congregational prayer had known that they would receive a bone covered with meat or two (small) pieces of meat present in between two ribs, he would come for ‘Isha’ prayer.”* (Bukhari, Ahkam, 52; Adhan, 29; Muslim, Masajid, 251-254)

4. His worship at Night and Dawn-times

The end of night, or the time of dawn is the time when the human mind is clear, the heart is pure, everywhere is silent, and people are asleep; these are the moments when spiritual diseases, like hypocrisy and vanity, have the least effect on people. These are the moments when Divine mercy descends on the world and the Lord of the universe is closest to His servants. This is why these are the best moments of the day for worship, when people are away from daily activities and hearts can turn to and concentrate on Allah.

Before five-daily prayers were prescribed upon believers, reciting long chapters from the Qur’an and performing *tahajjud* prayer in the late parts of the night had been obligatory. (See the Holy Qur’an, al-Muzzammil 73; 1-4) This had been the rule for about a year, and believers’ feet had been swelling because of long periods of standing up and praying. Finally, when five-daily prayers were

30. Here the intention of the Prophet (pbuh) was not to give permission to burn down the houses of those who do not come to the congregation, but to inform believers how great it is to neglect such a deed.





made obligatory upon believers, the ruling about *tahajjud* prayer was relieved and it became, and continues to be a supererogatory prayer. (al-Muzzammil 73; 20, Abu Dawud, Tatawwu', 17)

Allah the Almighty made the *tahajjud* prayer obligatory specifically for His beloved Prophet (pbuh), so He might bestow His blessings upon His Messenger abundantly and His Messenger might be able to benefit from such blessed times. It is stated in the Qur'an:

“And during a part of the night, pray Tahajjud beyond what is incumbent on you; maybe your Lord will raise you to a position of great glory.” (al-Isra, 17; 79)

After this command, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) never in his life ceased performing *tahajjud* prayer, reciting Qur'an, and saying supplications in the middle of the night. He even performed *tahajjud* prayer sitting when he did not have the strength to stand at the end of his life. (Abu Dawud, Tatawwu', 18) Allah's Messenger (pbuh) used to perform *tahajjud* and *witr* prayer together as thirteen rak'ahs. He later reduced them to eleven and then to nine rak'ahs close to the end of his life. (Abu dawud, Tatawwu', 26)

The Prophet (pbuh) performed his prayer, which he called the light of his eyes, more eagerly at night. He explained his eagerness to *tahajjud* prayer as follows:

“Allah the Almighty created an ardent desire towards a different thing in each prophet. What I like most is to worship at night...” (Haythami, II, 271)

Prayers and saying remembrances at night, when everyone is asleep, are very important to getting closer to Allah the Almighty. In this respect, the more the strength of love for Allah the more the desire for *tahajjud* prayer will be. Night prayers and saying remembrances are like meeting and chatting with the beloved. Being awake when everyone else is asleep means getting into the Lord's world of mercy and joining His assembly of love and clemency.

Since *tahajjud* prayer is one of the most important means to get a servant closer to his Lord, the Prophet (pbuh) wanted his ummah to benefit from such a great blessing; and he advised night prayers to every believer starting with his close relatives. One night he (pbuh) knocked on the door of Ali and Fati-mah's house (may Allah be pleased with them), and asked them: *“Aren't you*



going to pray?” (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 5) Here is how he (pbuh) advised his other companions to stay awake at dawns:

*“Try to get up at night, because it was the habit of righteous people before you and the means of getting closer to Allah. (This act of worship) keeps away from sins, becomes atonement for mistakes, and relieves the problems.”*³¹ (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 101)

When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came to Medina, Jewish scholar Abdullah b. Salam went to him. As soon as he saw the Prophet’s beautiful face, he said: “The owner of this face cannot be a liar.” He then said that the first advices that he heard from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) were: *“Salute each other! Give each other presents! Watch your relatives’ rights! Pray at night when everyone is asleep! Do all these and enter peacefully into Paradise.”* (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 42) Turning to Allah at a time when most people are asleep is certainly one of the most effective means of the acceptance of supplications and an easy entrance into Paradise. Hajah Ali Ramitani (q.s.) says that:

“A believing servant’s wish comes true at the place where three hearts come together; a believer’s sincere heart, Qur’an’s heart that is the Chapter Yasin (36), and the heart of the nights that is the time of dawn.”

Believers should help each other to popularize and perform such difficult acts of worship like tahajjud regularly. The best way of helping each other can be realized in peaceful families. Husbands and wives should support each other in worshipping Allah and doing good deeds. In fact, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) prayed for such families and said:

“May Allah have mercy on a man who gets up at night and prays, and awakens his wife; if she refuses, he should sprinkle water on her face. May Allah have mercy on a woman who gets up at night and prays, and awakens her husband; if he refuses, she would sprinkle water on his face.” (Abu Dawud,

31. By means of scientific achievements of modern age, doctors explain the wisdom behind the Prophet’s (pbuh) saying as follows: “because of the increased level of melatonin, low level of evening cortisol, decreased heart beats and blood pressure, human body discharges prolactin and growth hormone in the middle of the night. Thus a person needs to pass the early parts of the night sleeping (between 2:00 and 3:00 am). In order to be protected from the side effects of cortisol, heart beats, and adrenalin; and get the ultimate benefit from melatonin, people should be awake between 2:00 and 4:00 am and try to wake up before the first lights of the day. (Arslan Mayda md, p. 40)





Ṭaṭawwu', 18) Spouses should love each other in order to establish such a supporting connection between them.

The most appropriate thing to do, for those who begin an act of worship to attain Allah's mercy and start to get its blessings, is to maintain this good manner. A good habit or manner should be maintained and improved. This is what Allah the Almighty and His Messenger (pbuh) advise to the believers. According to the narration of Abdullah b. 'Amr b. al-'As, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) gave him the following advices:

"Allah's Apostle said to me, "O 'Abdullah! Do not be like so and so who used to pray at night and then stopped the night prayer." (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 19)

Such behavior not only means neglecting the most important object of human beings in this world, i.e. getting ready for the afterlife, but also leads to going to the presence of the Lord with nothing. Rumi (may Allah have mercy upon his soul) elegantly expresses to not go to Divine presence empty-handed and to use the nights wisely and make preparations for tomorrow instead of wasting it by sleeping:

"To come empty-handed to the door of friends is like going without wheat to the mill. Allah, Exalted is He, will say to the people at the gathering (for Judgment), "Where is your present for the Day of Resurrection? You have come to Us and alone without provision, just in the same guise as We created you. Listen, what have you brought as an offering—a gift on homecoming for the Day when you rise from the dead? Or had you no hope of returning? Did the promise of (meeting Me) today seem vain to you?" Dost you (O reader) disbelieve in the promise of being His guest? Then from the kitchen (of His bounty) you will get (only) dust and ashes. And if you are not disbelieving, how with such empty hands are you setting foot in the Court of that Friend? Refrain yourself a little from sleep and food: bring the gift for your meeting with Him. Become scant of sleep (like them that) were slumbering (but a small part of the night); in the hours of dawn be of (those who) were asking forgiveness of Allah." (Mathnawi, I, verses: 3171-3179)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) says that *"...the most excellent prayer after what is prescribed is prayer during the night."* (Muslim, Siyam, 203) and expresses the value of tahajjud prayer. This is why he did not want anybody from his ummah to spend the whole night sleeping. In fact, a person was mentioned before the Prophet (pbuh) and he was told that he had kept on sleeping



till morning and had not got up for the prayer. The Prophet (pbuh) did not like what he heard and said, “*Satan urinated in his ears.*”” (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 13)

Spending the nights awake, in other words keeping the heart with its Lord, is very important for spiritual revival. Just like our body’s need for material nourishment, our soul also needs spiritual nourishment in order to know and worship its Creator. Just like material nutrition spreads all over the body through veins and sustains the vitality of the body, spiritual nourishment or remembrance of Allah must settle in spiritual centers in the believers’ soul and awake them.

Tahajjud is said to be a shield against the hell-fire. Ali (r.a.) expresses that it is an amazing situation that on the one hand one wants to go Paradise and be saved from Hell-fire, on the other hand they spend the nights heedlessly sleeping:

أَلَا وَإِنِّي لَمْ أَرَ كَالْجَنَّةِ نَامَ طَالِبُهَا وَلَا كَالنَّارِ نَامَ هَارِبُهَا³²

The following narration of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) attracts our attention in this respect:

“If a man saw a dream during the lifetime of the Prophet he would narrate it to the Prophet. Once I wished to see a dream and narrate it to the Prophet. I was young, unmarried, and used to sleep in the Mosque during the lifetime of the Prophet. I dreamt that two angels took me and went away with me towards the Hell-fire which looked like a well with the inside walls built up, and had two side-walls like those of a well. There I saw some people in it whom I knew. I started saying, “I seek Refuge with Allah from the Hell-fire, I seek Refuge with Allah from the Hell-fire.” Then another angel met the other two and said to me, “Do not be afraid.” I narrated my dream to Hafsa who, in her turn, narrated it to the Prophet. He said, “What an excellent man Abdullah is if he only observes the night prayer.” (Salem, a sub-narrator said, “From then on Abdullah did not to sleep at night but very little hence forward.”) (Bukhari, Aṣḥab al-Nabi, 13)

Encouragement of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had an effect on not just Ibn Umar, but also other companions (may Allah be pleased with them), too. Their

32. “Indeed I Have Not See A Paradise Whose Claimant Sleeps And A Hell Whose Escapee Sleeps.” Baqillani, P. 144





lives were enlightened by supplications, remembrance of Allah, and worship in the quietness of the night. Qadi Baidawi (may Allah bless his soul) explains this as follows:

“When five-daily prayers were prescribed upon the believers and night prayer became a supererogatory act of worship, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) went out of his home to see the state of his companions at night. He found out that his companions houses were buzzing like a bee-hive because of the voices of Qur’an recitation and saying remembrances.” (*Anwar al-Tanzil*, IV, III)

Upon this Allah the Almighty revealed the following verses:

“And put your trust in the Mighty, the Merciful. Who sees you when you stand up (to pray) and your movements among those who prostrate themselves.” (al-Shuara 26; 217-19)

Even though the Prophet (pbuh) strongly advised tahajjud prayer, he warned those who overdo it and thus neglect their families, risk their health and jobs. He showed them the moderate way which can prevent tiredness and provide continuity. (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 7)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) comforted his companions who performed tahajjud prayer regularly but who were sad because of oversleeping and missing some of them saying:

“If a man prays in the night and sleep overcomes him during it, Allah writes for him the reward of his prayer, and his sleep is sadaqa for him.” (Malik, *Muwatta’a*, Salat al-Layl, 1)

Night prayer is the requirement of having a blessed and bountiful morning. The results of works and services performed in the morning will be in the extent of nourishing the heart during the night. Allah the Almighty ordered the Prophet (pbuh) the night prayer in the following verses:

“O you wrapped up in your garments! Rise to pray in the night except a little, half of it, or a little less, or a little more; and recite the Quran in slow, measured rhythmic tones. Soon shall We send down to you a weighty Message. Truly the rising by night is most potent for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (framing) the Word (of Prayer and Praise). True, there is for you by day prolonged occupation with ordinary duties.” (al-Muzzammil 73; 1-7)



The time of dawn is a peaceful and quiet time of the day, which is much more effective than other times for contemplation. Morning times, on the other hand, are the noisy moments of the day during which one loses his/her attention. Night is an exceptional time spared for worship and mornings, and is a great blessing to serve and earn the livelihood.

Night is the time to leave one's bed just for the sake of Allah and stand in the Divine presence with love and affection. For mature believers, nights are exceptional treasures because of the silence and blessings they hold. Those who know the real value of these treasures find the environment to turn their Lord for the acceptance of their prayers, worship, and supplications when all creation rests.

Those who cannot use the valuable times of the nights wisely will not be able to find enough time to turn to and worship their Lord during the day because of their daily preoccupations. Even if they can find some time, it will not be as effective and valuable as the dawn times. Blessings of Allah the Almighty should be used appropriately and in accordance with their objects. Satan does everything to disrupt this balance. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) says with the intention to show the way to those who spend their nights heedlessly sleeping:

"Satan puts three knots on the back of the head of any of you who is asleep. On every knot he reads and exhales the following words, 'The night is long, so stay asleep.' When one wakes up and remembers Allah, one knot is undone; and when one performs ablution, the second knot is undone, and when one prays the third knot is undone and one gets up energetic with a good heart in the morning; otherwise one gets up lazy and with a mischievous heart." (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 12)

Getting up during the night and performing prayers do well to the health of the body and soul. It is known that too much sleep harms people's health, dissipates the abundance of blessings, and decreases the capital of afterlife; while sleeping less weakens the animal side of humans and has a great effect on disciplining the self.

For those who do not appreciate the value of the night, goodness of the mornings cannot be attained. Therefore, those who would like to attain the welfare of the day has to use their nights for the purpose of entering a divine and spiritual atmosphere.



Both material and spiritual benefits of tahajjud prayer and reviving the nights is accepted and admitted by everyone. The examples about the benefits of worshipping at nights are as follows:

In the battle of Yarmuk when two armies came close to each other, the commander of the Byzantium army sent an Arab spy to check the Muslim army. When the spy came back, the commander asked him:

“What are they doing? What is the situation?” The spy responded:

بِاللَّيْلِ رُحْبَانٌ وَبِالنَّهَارِ فُرْسَانٌ

“They are pious worshippers at night and cavalries in the morning.”

Then the commander told him:

“If you are telling the truth, then it is better for us to be under the ground than to meet with them...” (Tabari, *Tarikh*, III, 418)

Below is another exemplary event from history:

No enemy was able to be victorious over the companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). When Heraclius’ army lost the battle against Muslims, he angrily turned to them and asked:

“Shame on you! What kind of people are your opponents? Aren’t they people like you are?” His soldiers said: “Yes, they are”

Heraclius asked again:

“Which army has more soldiers, yours or theirs?”

They replied:

“We are much more superior to them in every way.”

He said: “Then what is wrong with you? Every time you fight with them, you terribly lose the battle.”

A wise Roman stood up and said:

“Because they spend their nights worshipping and their mornings fasting. They fulfill their promises, command the right and forbid the wrong; and they share everything with each other...” Upon this respond Heraclius told him:

“You have told the truth.” (Ibn Aṣakir, II, 97)

As we can see in the above mentioned incidents, there is spiritual light in the night, which moves the hearts and adds more to the light of the morning by means of the victories gained in it. Pains of contemporary Muslims should be the sad results of their detachment from their origins and their weakness in servitude to Allah the Almighty. If a believer spends his/her night wisely and benefits from the spirituality of remembrances of Allah, his/her nights become brighter than his/her days; whereas wasting nights sleeping aimlessly is an irretrievable loss like the rain drops falling into an ocean.

5. His Supererogatory Prayers

“...My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing Nawafil (praying or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him...”

(Bukhari, Riqaq, 38)

The life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is teemed with excellent samples of worship and servitude to Allah the Almighty. There were supererogatory ritual prayers that he performed at various times during the day. He also encouraged his ummah to perform these prayers as much as they can. For servants of Allah the fastest way to get close to Him is by completing the obligatory acts of obedience, however they can continue their spiritual journey by doing supererogatory prayers. Allah the Almighty promises such blessings in Paradise that no eyes have ever seen and no one has ever thought of before. The Prophet (pbuh) says that:

“A house will be built in Paradise, for anyone who prays in a day and a night twelve voluntary rak’ahs” (Muslim, Musafirun, 103)

One of the incidents which show the merits of the *nawafil* (supererogatory prayers) and its rewards happened on the day of the conquest of Khaibar.

“A man came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and said:

“Apostle of Allah, I have gained today so much so that no one gained from this valley.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked:

“Woe unto you, how much did you gain?”





The man replied:

“I kept on selling and buying until I gained three hundred uqiyahs.³³” The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) said:

“I tell you a man who gained better than you.”

The man asked:

“What is that, Apostle of Allah?” He replied:

“Two rak’ahs of supererogatory prayer after the obligatory prayer.” (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 168)

The first thing that the servant will be questioned on Judgment Day is the ritual prayers. The first thing which will come to the help of a servant on that fearsome and difficult day is his/her supererogatory prayers. This is expressed in the following prophetic saying:

“On Judgment Day the first thing that a servant is going to be questioned is ritual prayer. If his/her prayer is properly performed, he/she wins; but if it is not, he/she loses. If there are incomplete obligatory prayers of the servant, his Lord says:

“Look if there is any supererogatory prayer of my servant. The missing obligatory prayers get completed by the supererogatory ones. Then the servant gets questioned from his/her other acts in the same manner.” (Tirmidhi, Salat, 188)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) preferred to perform the nawafil in his home just as much as he made every effort to perform the obligatory prayers in congregation. He said, in this respect:

“... O People! Pray in your houses, for the best prayer of a person is that which he prays in his house except the compulsory prayers.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 81)

As it is known that obligatory prayers are acts of worship which all Muslims have to perform. Therefore, they should be performed openly and they should be strongly encouraged. This is why it is more appropriate to perform them openly and in consciousness of the congregation. Whereas, supererogatory prayers are acts of worship which are left to the person’s will, in other words it is optional. In order to easily overcome the diseases of hypocrisy

33. Uqiyah Is Measurement Of Weight, Which Is Equal To 1283 Grams.



and fame, those who compete on the path of Allah need to perform nawafil secretly at their homes.

Another important point is to honor and bless the homes by performing supererogatory prayers. The great quantity of nawafil performed should fill a believer's house with a spiritual and divine atmosphere. It is not an appropriate behavior that believers who pay great attention to congregational prayers turn their homes into ruins. In this respect, the Prophet (pbuh) warned the believers saying:

"Offer some of your prayers (Nawafil) at home, and do not take your houses as graves." (Bukhari, Salat, 52)

a. Duha Prayer (Prayer before Noon)

It is impossible to count the blessings of the Lord which have been bestowed upon the servants. They should thank and give charity for every one of those blessings. Even though it is impossible for weak and helpless human beings to afford to give enough charity for such abundant and various blessings, at least they should think about the blessings and do everything they can. Only this way, Divine mercy can be attracted. Allah the Almighty accepts His servants little deeds and bestows upon them great rewards in return. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) says that:

"In the morning charity is due from every bone in the body of every one of you. Every utterance of Allah's glorification is an act of charity. Every utterance of praise of Him is an act of charity, every utterance of declaration of His Oneness is an act of charity, every utterance of declaration of His Greatness is an act of charity, enjoining good is an act of charity, forbidding what is wrong is an act of charity, and two rak'ahs which one prays in the forenoon will suffice." (Muslim, Musafirun, 84)

In other words, two rak'ahs of duha (forenoon) prayer a day will be accepted, in the extent of our sincerity, as a statement of our gratitude for the endless blessings of our Lord. Thus, our Lord provides an easy means, which everyone can do, for us to show our gratitude for His blessings; which is also a blessing. No matter how much we thank Him, it cannot be enough.

Allah's Apostle (pbuh) put great emphasis on forenoon prayer. According to reports, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prayed four rak'ahs at the forenoon





prayer, but sometimes more as Allah pleased (Muslim, Musafirun, 78-79). There are other reports that he prayed eight and twelve rak'ahs. (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 31)

Abu Huraira narrates that:

"My friend (the Prophet (pbuh)) advised me to do three things and I shall not leave them till I die, these are: To fast three days every month, to offer the Duha prayer, and to offer Witr before sleeping." (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 33)

One time the Prophet (pbuh) sent a military expedition to a place. The Muslim army came back with a lot of booty. Upon this Abu Bakr (r.a.) said:

"O Messenger of Allah! We haven't seen any other military group which came back faster and brought more booty than them." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked:

"Would you like me to tell a faster thing which brings more booty?" And then he continued his words:

"If a man does his ablution well and goes to the mosque, performs the dawn (fajr) prayer and then performs the forenoon (duha) prayer, this is a much faster way, which brings more to him." (Ibn Hibban, VI, 276)

The time for forenoon prayer begins about forty five minutes after dawn and continues until half an hour before the midday, when the sun is at its peak point. It is better and more rewarding if it is performed after one fourth of the morning passes. Worshipping the Lord at those hours of the day is considered valuable, because usually not many people pray at those moments of the day. Early hours of the morning are the times of gaining livelihood. Encouragement for praying at forenoon, which is maybe the busiest hours of the day aims to prevent humans from getting too deep into the worldly life, and so is like an antidote for it.

b. Awwabin Prayer (Prayer after Evening Prayer)

Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) narrates that the Messenger of Allah would perform two rak'ahs of supererogatory prayer after the obligatory evening prayer. (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 29) This is called "awwabin" prayer.

The word *awwabin* is the plural form of *awwab* which means "the one who turns to Allah and repents." Anyone who realizes his/her mistake, turns



to and obeys Allah, and then repents for his/her sins and does good deeds can be called *awwab*. Those who pray six, four, or two rak'ahs – or according to some reports without any specified rak'ahs - after evening prayer are, too, called "*awwabin*."

c. *Hajah Prayer (Prayer at the Times of Need)*

Allah's Messenger (pbuh), who remembered Allah the Almighty and presented all his needs to Him, advised his followers to perform two rak'ahs of ritual prayer and then ask their needs from Allah. The Prophet's saying, in this regard, is as follows:

"He who needs Allah's or a human being's help should first perform ablution, and do this well; then perform two rak'as of prayer; after that say praises for Allah the Almighty and call for blessings for the Messenger of Allah; then say the following prayer:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ. سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ. الْحَمْدُ
لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. اَللّهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَسْأَلُكَ مُوْجِبَاتِ رَحْمَتِكَ وَغَزَائِمَ
مَغْفِرَتِكَ وَالْغَنِيْمَةَ مِنْ كُلِّ بَرٍّ وَالسَّلَامَةَ مِنْ كُلِّ اِثْمٍ. اَسْأَلُكَ اَلَا تَدَعُ
لِیْ ذَنْبًا اِلَّا غَفَرْتَهُ وَلَا هَمًّا اِلَّا فَرَجْتَهُ وَلَا حَاجَةً هِیْ لَكَ رِضًا اِلَّا
قَضَيْتَهَا لِیْ يَا اَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِیْنَ.

There is no god but Allah the Clement and Wise. There is no god but Allah the High and Mighty. Glory be to Allah, Lord of the Tremendous Throne. All praise is to Allah, Lord of the worlds. I ask you (O Allah) everything that leads to your mercy, and your tremendous forgiveness, enrichment in all good, and freedom from all sin. Do not leave a sin of mine (O Allah), except that you forgive it, nor any concern except that you create for it an opening, nor any need in which there is your good pleasure except that you fulfill it, O Most Merciful!"

Then he/she should pray for whatever his/her worldly or spiritual need is, because it will be given to him/her." (Ibn Majah, Iqamah, 189; Tirmidhi, Witr, 17)





Such a habit of turning to and asking for needs from Allah the Almighty instead of mortal human beings will result in the belief in the unity of Allah to settle in the hearts. It will also help believers to reach the state of *ihsan* or to live in this world knowing that Allah the Almighty is always with them.

Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who followed the above prophetic advice about *hajjah* prayer, took refuge in Allah whenever they needed something, and in the end they got their needs. On a summer day, the gardener of Anas (r.a.) came to him and complained to him about the lack of rain and aridity. Anas (r.a.) asked for some water, performed ablution and prayed. After finishing his prayer, he turned to his gardener and asked:

“Can you see anything in the sky?” The man replied:

“No, I cannot.” Anas (r.a.) went back inside and continued to perform prayer. After three or four times, he asked again:

““Can you see anything in the sky?” His gardener replied:

“I see a cloud looking like a bird wing.” Upon this Anas (r.a.) kept on his supplications and prayer. A little later the gardener came in and said:

“The sky is filled with clouds and it is raining now.” Anas (r.a.) told him:

“Now get on the horse, which was given by Bishr b. Shagaf and check up to where it is raining.”

The gardener got on to the horse and saw there was no rain beyond the palaces of Musayyarín and Gadban. Anas’ (r.a.) garden was within this limit” (Ibn Sa’d, VII, 21-22).

There was a companion of the Prophet (pbuh) named Abu Mi’laq. He was a trustworthy and pious tradesman. Once he was on a journey. A robber stopped him and said:

“Give me everything you have and I will kill you.” Abu Mi’laq told him:

“If it is just property you want, here they are, take them.” The thief replied:

“No, I just want your life.” Abu Milaq:

“Then let me pray.” The thief let him and Abu Mi’laq performed his prayer and then said the following supplication:



يَا وَدُودُ، يَا ذَا الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدِ، يَا فَعَّالاً لِمَا يُرِيدُ! أَسْأَلُكَ بِعِزَّتِكَ الَّتِي
لَا تُرَامُ وَمُلْكِكَ الَّذِي لَا يُضَامُ وَبِنُورِكَ الَّذِي مَلَأَ أَرْكَانَ عَرْشِكَ أَنْ
تَكْفِينِي شَرَّ هَذَا (اللَّصِّ). يَا مُغِيثُ اغْنِنِي

The one who is full of loving kindness! Lord of the Throne of Glory! O Allah, The great doer of what He wills! For the sake of Your unreachable greatness, and for the sake of Your Throne to which no damage can be inflicted upon, and for the sake of Your Light, which covers Your Throne! I ask You to save me from the harm of this thief. O Reliever (of the needs), help me!

Abu Mi'laq repeated this supplication thrice. As soon as he finished it, there appeared a cavalry holding his spear and killed the robber. Then he turned to Abu Mi'laq. Abu Mi'laq asked the cavalry:

“Who are you? Allah saved me by means of you.”

“I am from the fourth level of heaven. When you said your first supplication, I heard the gates of heaven crackle. With your second prayer, I heard the voices of the people of the heavens. When you made your third supplication, I heard that “someone in need is praying.” I asked Allah to send me to kill the robber. Allah the Almighty accepted my request and I came down. Know this well, the supplications of those who perform ritual ablution and four rak'ahs of prayer are accepted whether they are in need or not.” (Ibn Hajar, *Al-Isabah*, 182)

d. *Istikharah Prayer*

People of the age of ignorance used to draw arrows to help in making decisions in important matters like marriage, trade, etc. Thus, they hoped to find whether it would be good or bad for them. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) prohibited this custom, because it had no basis and it just depended on chance. Additionally, it consisted of slander to Allah the Almighty, because the phrases “my Lord ordered me to do this” and “my Lord prohibited me to do this” were written on the arrows. Instead the Prophet (pbuh) taught his companions the method of *istikharah*.

The most significant benefit of *istikharah* is that it removes the selfish desires of human beings and helps the servants turn to Allah. This is why the



Messenger of Allah (pbuh) put emphasis on *istikharah* and considered abandoning it as misery:

“One of the reasons of happiness for human beings is to be content with His Will. One of the reasons of their misery is to abandon istikharah...” (Tirmidhi, Qadar, 15)

Jabir (r.a.) narrates about *istikharah*:

“Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) taught us to perform *istikharah* for all our actions like he was teaching us a chapter from the Qur’an. He (pbuh) said:

“If anyone of you intends to do something, he should perform a two-Rak’at prayer other than the obligatory prayer, and then say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي – فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ – فَاقْضُ لِي. وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي – فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ – فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ وَاقْدُرْ لِيَ الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ رَضِّنِي بِهِ

O Allah, I seek Your guidance [in making a choice] by virtue of Your knowledge, and I seek ability to do good by virtue of Your power, and I ask You of Your great bounty. You have power, I have none. And You know, I know not. You are the Knower of the unknown. O Allah, if in Your knowledge, this matter (then it should be mentioned by name) is good for me both in this world and in the Hereafter (or: in my religion, my livelihood and my affairs), then ordain it for me, make it easy for me, and bless it for me. And if in Your knowledge it is bad for me and for my religion, my livelihood and my affairs (or: for me both in this world and the next), then turn me away from it, [and turn it away from me], and ordain for me the good wherever it may be and make me pleased with it.”

Then he should mention his need while he was saying “this matter” his prayer. (Bukhari, Daawat, 48)

Peace and tranquility appears in the heart of a servant, who turns to Allah and sincerely asks for help from Allah. Especially, for a solution of a problem, and an inclination that emerges about a matter with the permission of Allah. And the servant who acts in accordance with the inclination in his/her heart will be protected from doing wrong.

e. The Prayer of “Greeting the Mosque”

Abu Qatada, a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), said: I entered the mosque, when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had been sitting among people, and I also sat down among them. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“What prevented you from offering two rak’ahs (of Nafl prayer) before sitting down?”

I said: Messenger of Allah, I saw you sitting and people sitting (around you and I, therefore, sat in your company). He (the Holy Prophet) then said:

“When anyone among you enters the mosque, he should not sit till he has observed two rak’ahs.” (Muslim, Musafirun, 70)

There are other prophetic sayings which advise to offer *tahiyyat al-masjid* prayer when visiting a mosque. The term *tahiyyat al-masjid* means to salute the mosque. Mosques are the houses of Allah. There is nothing more natural than saluting the owner of the house when entering it. In a way by performing *tahiyyat al-masjid* prayer, believers salute Allah the Almighty, offer Him his submission, respect, and servitude. However, this prayer should not be performed during prohibited times of the day.

f. The Prayer Performed after a Ritual Ablution

At the time of the Fajr prayer the Prophet asked Bilal,

“Tell me of the best deed you did after embracing Islam, for I heard your footsteps in front of me in Paradise.”

Bilal replied:





“I did not do anything worth mentioning except that whenever I performed ablution during the day or night, I prayed after that ablution as much as I can perform.” (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 17)

Being ritually pure all the time and performing prayers after having a ritual ablution are very important steps on the way to reach the state of *ihsan*. Only those who strive and endeavor can be successful in achieving this goal. This state becomes a reason for the forgiveness of the sins. After Uthman (r.a.) performed the ritual ablution to teach the people, he said that:

“I saw the Prophet (pbuh) perform his ritual ablution like this. After finishing his ritual ablution, he (pbuh) said,

“If anyone performs ablution like that of mine and offers a two-rak’at prayer during which he does not think of anything else (not related to the present prayer) then his past sins will be forgiven.” (Bukhari, Wudu, 24)

g. The Prayer of Repentance

An atonement for sins committed as result of heedlessness and obeying one’s desires is to turn to Allah with penitence; because immediately after committing a sin and before letting the sin stain the heart, turning to Allah and repenting for it will be redemption for it. Allah the Almighty states in the Qur’an:

“And if a whisper from the devil reaches you (O Muhammad) then seek refuge in Allah. Lo! He is the Hearer, the Knower.” (Fussilat, 41; 36)

“And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: for those things that are good remove those that are evil: be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord)” (Hud 11; 114)

When David (pbuh) ruled hastily without listening to the two parties and made a mistake, he asked his Lord’s forgiveness, turned to Allah by bowing down and prostrating. (Sad 38; 24)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said that:

“Where ever you are, fear Allah and be a pious servant of Allah. When you commit a sin, do a good deed immediately after it, because goodness clears off the sin. And treat people with good manners.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 55)



In similar verses and prophetic sayings, a person who does a mistake is asked to do something good immediately after the mistake. Ali (r.a.) says that:

“I was a man; when I heard a tradition from the Apostle of Allah (pbuh), Allah benefited me with it as much as He willed. But when someone of his companions narrated a tradition to me I adjured him. When he took an oath, I testified him.

Abu Bakr narrated a tradition to me, and Abu Bakr narrated truthfully. He said: I heard the apostle of Allah (pbuh) saying:

“When a servant (of Allah) commits a sin, and he performs ablution well, and then stands and prays two rak’ahs, and asks pardon of Allah, Allah pardons him.”

He then recited this verse:

“And those who, having done something to be ashamed of, or wronged their own souls, and ask for forgiveness for their sins, and who can forgive sins except Allah? And are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in (the wrong) they have done.” (Al-i Imran 3; 135)” (Abu dawud, Wittr, 26/1521; Tirmidhi, Salat, 181/406; Tafsir, 3/3006; Ahmad, I, 2)

h. The Prayer for Thanking a Divine Blessing

Thanking the endless blessings of Allah the Almighty is a duty that all people must do. Showing gratitude increases the blessings; while ingratitude brings about the decline of the blessing and the unthankful receiver of the blessing will be subjected to a severe punishment. Jalal al-Din Rumi quoted:

“Gratitude is like sucking the breasts (divine blessings). No matter how full the breasts are, the milk only comes out after sucking (giving thanks).” (Fihi Ma Fihi, p. 165)

When the Messenger of Allah became happy or received some good news, he would prostrate³⁴ and perform prayer to thank for it. (Ibn Majah, Salat, 192)

Anas (r.a.) narrates that:

34. Prostration for thankfulness is done just like doing prostration after reciting certain Qur’anic verses (sajdat al-tilawah). First the person makes his/her ablution, intends to make prostration for gratitude, says “Allahu akbar” without raising his/her hands, prostrates, stays prostrating as long as possible, and then stands up.





Allah's Apostle (pbuh) was informed that one of his needs was solved. He immediately went down to prostrate. (Ibn Majah, Salat, 192)

Similarly, companions of the Prophet (pbuh) performed gratitude prayer when they became happy. Ka'b b. Malik (r.a.) had not attended the expedition of Tabuk, and he had very distressed days because of this mistake. When he learned that his repentance had been accepted, he immediately prostrated. (Ibn Majah, Salat, 192) After that he gave all his possessions to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked him to donate them; however, the Prophet (pbuh) told him to donate half of his possessions and to keep the other half for his family. (Bukhari, Maghazi, 79)

Actually gratitude is an act of the heart; however, in order to strengthen the feelings in the heart, they need to have some kind of external manifestation. For example, aggressiveness and extravagance resulting from the divine blessings should be prevented. Obedience to the real Owner of the blessings and prostrating before Him will eliminate such spiritual diseases.

i. Tarawih Prayer (Night Prayer in the Month of Ramadan)

To perform *tarawih* prayer in the nights of Ramadan is a tradition of the Messenger of Allah. He said that, "*Allah the Almighty made the fasting in the month of Ramadan obligatory; and I made the tarawih prayer my tradition.*" (Ibn Majah, Salat, 173) In order to get the most benefit from the month of Ramadan, believers should revive the Ramadan nights with *tarawih* prayers in addition to fasting throughout the day. They should also be careful about what they say and retreat to a mosque for a number of days. Reviving the nights of Ramadan is a means of forgiveness. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stated that:

"Whoever prayed at night in it (the month of Ramadan) out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." (Bukhari, Tarawih, 46)

According to the narration of Aisha (r.a.) the Prophet (pbuh) used to perform acts of worship during the month of Ramadan more than the rest of the year. In the last ten days of Ramadan he would increase his worship even more. He would revive the nights of the last ten days with prayer and also wake his family up for it. (Bukhari, Faḍlu Laylat al-Qadr, 5)



Even though Allah's Messenger (pbuh) performed tarawih prayer at night in the month of Ramadan, he did not perform it in congregation. He deemed more appropriate to let everybody do as much as he/she can. *Tarawih* prayer continued to be performed individually during the days of Caliph Abu Bakr (r.a.). Then, during Umar's caliphate it began to be performed in congregation. Aisha (r.a.) narrates the following incident, which explains why the Prophet (pbuh) performed it alone and not in congregation:

"One night in the month of Ramadan Allah's Apostle went out in the middle of the night and prayed in the mosque and some men prayed behind him. In the morning, the people spoke about it and then a large number of them gathered and prayed behind him (on the second night). In the next morning the people again talked about it and on the third night the mosque was full with a large number of people. Allah's Apostle came out and the people prayed behind him. On the fourth night the Mosque was overwhelmed with people and could not accommodate them, but the Prophet came out (only) for the morning prayer. When the morning prayer was finished he said, "your presence was not hidden from me but I was afraid lest the night prayer (Qiyam) should be enjoined on you and you might not be able to carry it on." So, Allah's Apostle died and the situation remained like that (i.e. people prayed individually)." (Bukhari, Tarawih, 1; Muslim, Musafirun, 177)

k. Tasbih Prayer (Prayer of Grace)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) once said to his uncle 'Abbas (r.a.):

"O my uncle! Shall I not give you a gift? Shall I not show you something by means of which Allah the Almighty will forgive your sins, the first and the last of them, the past and recent, the unintentional and the intentional, the small and huge, the secret and open?"

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) then taught him the *tasbih* prayer.

"You perform four-rak'ahs of prayer. In each rak'ah you need to recite surah al-Fatiha and another chapter from the Qur'an. After completing your recitation, say fifteen times "Subhaanallaahi walhamdu lillaahi walaa ilaaha illallaahu wallaahu akbar" while you are standing. Then bend down and say the same words ten times while bending. Then stand up and say them again ten times. After that go down to prostrate and say them ten more times; say





them ten more times when you raise your head from prostration and ten more during the second prostration and another ten after the second prostration. Do the same in the second rak'ah. If you would like, you can perform this prayer daily. If you cannot offer it daily, then perform it every Friday or once a month or once a year. If you cannot, perform it at least once in your life time." (Abu Dawud, Ṭaṭawwu, 14; Tirmidhi, Witr, 19)

I. Istisqa Prayer (Prayer for Rain)

Once people complained to the Messenger of Allah about the lack of rain, so he gave orders for a pulpit, and when it was set up for him in the musalla,³⁵ he appointed a day for the people to gather. He came out on that day when the sun had just appeared and sat down on the pulpit. He extolled Allah's greatness and praised Him. Then he said:

"You have complained of drought in your areas and of delay in receiving rain at the beginning of its season, but you have been ordered by Allah to supplicate Him and He has promised that He would answer your prayers."

Then he said:

"All praise is for Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the King of the Day of Judgment. There is no god but Allah Who does what He wishes. Dear Lord! There is no god except You. You are the Self-sufficient and we are the poor. Send down rain upon us and make it a source of strength for us and satisfaction for us."

He then raised his hands and kept raising them till the whiteness of his armpits could be seen. After this, he turned his back to the people and inverted his cloak, keeping his hands raised. Finally, he faced the people, descended from the pulpit, and prayed two-rak'ahs. At that time Allah produced a cloud, thunder, and lightning. And, by Allah's permission, it rained and before he reached the mosque there was flooding. Then he saw how quickly the people were running for shelter, he laughed until his molar teeth could be seen. He said:

35. **Musalla** means a wide area which is reserved for believers to perform Friday, holiday, and funeral prayers in congregation. During the early centuries of Islam, Muslims reserved such places outside their cities and there they performed Friday, holiday, and funeral prayers in congregation instead of separate mosques. Thus, the entire residents of a city were able to come together at least once a week.



“I bear witness that Allah has power over all things and I am Allah’s slave and Messenger.” (Abu Dawud, Istisqa, 2)

m. Kusuf and Husuf Prayers (Prayers during Lunar and Solar Eclipses)

Another supererogatory prayer is the prayers offered during lunar and solar eclipses, or some kind of cosmic sign like getting covered by extreme darkness. When cosmic signs appear, people realize their servitude and take refuge in Allah. In a way, they seclude themselves from the world. Such an atmosphere is an opportunity for a believer to offer prayers, say supplications, and do good deeds.

On the other hand, there are some unbelievers who worship the moon and sun. When a believer sees an incident that shows that the moon and sun are creations of Allah, then he/she should take refuge in Allah and offer Him prayers. Such an act is a sign that glorifies the religion and confutes the unbelievers.

According to a narration by Abdullah b. ‘Amr (r.a.), one day a solar eclipse happened. He (pbuh) stood up and led the believers in a prayer. He stood in the prayer so long that people thought that he would not bend down. Then he bent down and stayed bending for a long time. Then he stood back up and again he stayed standing for such a long time that people thought that he was not going to prostrate. Finally, he went down to prostrate. He prolonged his prostration so much that people began to think he would not sit up. Then, he sat up and stayed sitting for a long time before prostrating for a second time. His second prostration was also very long. When he finished performing two-rak’ahs of prayer, the sun appeared with all its brightness. Then the Prophet (pbuh) went up on the pulpit, and addressed his followers. After saying his thanks and praises to Allah, he continued:

“The Sun and the Moon are two of the Signs (Ayat) of Allah: they do not darken for the death or birth of any person, but Allah strikes fear into His servants by means of them. So when you see them darken, remember and mention Allah, declare His Greatness, offer prayer, give in charity, and supplicate to Him and seek His forgiveness.” (Bukhari, Kusuf, 2-4)





Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told his companions that the sun and moon were just signs of Allah and eclipses did not show someone's death or birth. Since only Allah knows the unknown and fate, every moment can be the end of the world. Or a believer should think that any moment can be his/her time to leave this world. Therefore, he/she should be in constant state of worship. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had a feeling when the sky darkened, thundered, or a solar or lunar eclipses occurred, and so he would always pray to Allah for the protection of his followers.

What concerned the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was the fear of Allah. According to the narration of Aisha, whenever he saw clouds or winds, signs of deep concern would appear on his face. Sometimes he would stay and look at the clouds; sometimes he would go in and out of his home. He could not relax until he saw it raining. When Aisha (r.a.) wanted to learn what the reason for his acts was, he replied:

"O 'Aisha! What is the guarantee for me that there will be no punishment in it, since some people were punished with a wind? Verily, some people saw (received) the punishment, but (while seeing the cloud) they said, 'This cloud will give us rain.'" (Bukhari, Tafsir, 46/2; Muslim, Istisqa, 14-16)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) prayed during solar and lunar eclipses until it was over and ordered the believers to do the same. (Ibn Hibban, VII, 68, 100)

Kusuf or *Husuf* prayer (or prayers during Lunar and Solar Eclipses) is a tradition of the Prophet (pbuh). It is a two-rak'ah prayer. Believers keep performing the prayer until the eclipse clears. There is no problem in performing the prayer during a solar eclipse in congregation, but prayer during a lunar eclipse should be performed individually. Performing these prayers in a mosque is also a prophetic tradition. No calls for the prayer are recited. Only during the solar eclipse someone calls: "Gather for the prayer." (Bukhari, Kusuf, 3; M. A. Köksal, XI, 221)

Just like solar and lunar eclipses, earthquakes are also signs of the Greatness of Allah. In the fifth year of Hijrah, an earthquake occurred in Medina. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said:

"Your Lord wants to turn you to a state, from which He is content with. Then try to earn His contentment." (Ibn Abi Shaybah, II, 220; Ibn Athir, Usdu'l Ghabah,



I, 29) There are reports that Ibn Abbas led believers in prayer during earthquakes comparing them to eclipses. (Ibn Abi Shaybah, II, 220)

B. HIS FASTING

“O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, so that you may guard (against evil).”

(al-Baqarah 2; 183)

Fasting is an excellent act of worship, which strengthens the spiritual side of human beings. By means of fasting, people go into such an atmosphere that even angels admire them. Fasting, at the same time, prevents servants from falling into sins in the extent of weakening the inner self. There is no other act of worship which controls the self and polishes the spirit more effectively than fasting does.

When Abu Umamah (r.a.) asked the Messenger of Allah:

“O Messenger of Allah! Tell me such an act of worship that Allah the Almighty would reward me because of it.”

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) replied:

“I advise you fasting for there is no other act of worship resembling to it.” (Nasai, Siyām, 43)

One of the acts of worship, which Allah’s Messenger constantly performed, is fasting. He (pbuh) informs us about the value of fasting as follows:

“Every good deed of the son of Adam would be multiplied. A good deed will be receiving a tenfold to seven hundredfold reward. Allah, the Exalted and Majestic, has said: With the exception of fasting, for it is done for Me and I will give a reward for it, for My servant abandons his passion and food just for My sake. There are two occasions of joy for the one who fasts, one of them when he breaks it, and the other when he meets his Lord. The breath of an observer of fast is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk.” (Muslim, Siyām, 164)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would fast even on the warmest days of the summer. Abu Darda’ (r.a.) reported:





“We set out during the month of Ramadan with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in such an intense heat that one of us would place his hand over his head in order to protect himself against the excessive heat, and none among us was observing the fast, except the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and ‘Abdullah b. Rawaha.” (Muslim, Siyām, 108-109) He stated that *“Fasting is a shield (or a screen or a shelter)”* (Bukhari, Sawm, 2) and he always used the strongest shield.

Fasting is an act of obedience which takes those who observe it to piety. And through piety a servant will be protected from Hell-fire and get closer to Paradise. In this respect, the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“Indeed, anyone who fasts for one day for Allah’s Pleasure, Allah will keep his face away from the (Hell) fire for (a distance covered by a journey of) seventy years.” (Bukhari, Jihad, 36)

A believer, who is hungry because of fasting, comprehends the state of the poor and treats them mercifully and generously. With an empty stomach one tastes spirituality deeper than those with full stomach. Their spirituality and comprehension become stronger. Those who recognize their humility and servitude diverge from bad habits and eventually adorn with good manners. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) expresses that fasting strengthens the spirituality and weakens the inner animal self in the following lines:

“These austerities of dervishes—what are they for? (The reason is) that that tribulation (imposed) on the body enhances the everlasting life of spirits. Unless a (mystic) traveler gains the everlasting life of his (spiritual) self, how should he make his body a sick and perishing through fasting and worship?” (Mathnawi, II, 3349-3350)

In order to attain the above mentioned results from fasting, it should be observed just for the sake of Allah the Almighty and it should be performed according to the Prophet’s instructions. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) wants those who observe fasting to stay away from evil acts and words; and be gentle, dignified, and merciful. In fact this is stated in the following sayings of the Prophet (pbuh):

“The Prophet said, “Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting.)” (Bukhari, Sawm, 8)



“... If one of you is fasting, he should avoid speaking bad and quarreling, and if somebody should fight or quarrel with him, he should say, ‘I am fasting’...” (Bukhari, Sawm, 9)

We see that the Prophet (pbuh) acted moderately in his fasting just like in his all other acts and advised his companions to do the same. From time to time, he warned those who would leave everything and would observe fasting and prayer all the time. He (pbuh) told them to take him as an example. The Prophet (pbuh) prohibited *sawm al-wisal* (fasting continuously without breaking one's fast in the evening or eating before the following dawn). When companions told the Prophet (pbuh):

“But you practice al-wisal?” the Prophet (pbuh) replied,

“I am not like any of you, for I am given food and drink (by Allah) during the night.” (Bukhari, Sawm, 48)

When moderation is not observed, people choose excess in one or another direction. Those who exaggerate get tired after a while and cannot even keep up the minimum requirements. The most difficult problem about the acts of obedience is to get tired and bored from performing them. When a person's self gets tired from an act, he/she cannot achieve pious reverence and his/her act cannot be considered as an act of worship. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) points out this fact by saying: *“Every act has a vital state, and every state of vitality has a point of tiredness and boredom...”* (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 21) Just like prescribing medicine to a patient, Allah the Almighty ordained the acts of obedience neither too much nor too little but just as much as His servants need.

Bahili (r.a.) experienced such an incident which shows the significance of moderation in worship.

“One day Bahiliyyah visited the Apostle of Allah (pbuh). He said:

“O Apostle of Allah, do you not recognize me?” The Prophet (pbuh) asked:

“Who are you?”

He replied:

“I am al-Bahili who came to you last year.” He said:





“What has changed you? You were looking well, then you were good in appearance before?”

He said:

“I have fasted during the mornings and have food only at night since I departed from you.”

Thereupon the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Why did you torment yourself? Fast during Ramadan (the month of patience) and fast for one day every month.”

He said:

“Increase it for me, for I have (more) strength.”

He said:

“Fast two days.”

He again said:

“Increase it for me.”

He said:

“Fast three days.”

He again said:

“Increase it for me.” He said:

“Fast three days from the inviolable months (Rajab, Zilqadah, Zilhijja, and Muharram) and then stop; fast three days from the inviolable months and then stop; fast three days from the inviolable months and then stop.”

He indicated by his three fingers, and joined them and then opened them.”

(Abu Dawud, Sawm, 55)

According to Anas’s (r.a.) report, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) always acted according to the conditions. He did not fast in some months so that his companions thought that he was not going to fast again; and he fasted in some other months so many days that his friends thought that he was going to fast the entire month. (Bukhari, Sawm, 53) In addition, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would not exaggerate fasting by observing it a number of months continuously. In fact according to the reports of Umm Salama (r.a.), he never



happened to fast two entire months in a row except the months of Sha'ban and Ramadan. (Tirmidhi, Sawm, 37) Even this happened only in some years.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) wanted those who fast to hurry in breaking their fast. And he said *“The people will remain on the right path as long as they hasten the breaking of the fast.”* (Bukhari, Sawm, 45) One day Masruq (r.a.) told Aisha (r.a.):

“Mother of the Believers, there are two persons among the Companions of Muhammad (pbuh) one among whom hastens in breaking the fast and in observing prayer, and the other delays breaking the fast and delays observing prayer.” She said:

“Who among the two hastens in breaking fast and observing prayers?”

Masruq said,

“It is ‘Abdullah. i. e. son of Mas’ud” whereupon Aisha (r.a.) said: This is how the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did...” (Muslim, Siyām, 49-50)

1. Supererogatory Fasting

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would continue the supererogatory fasting from time to time after the month of Ramadan. He was careful about fasting on Mondays and Thursdays and he explained its reason as follows: *“Deeds of people are presented (to Allah) on Mondays and Thursdays. So I like that my actions be presented while I am fasting.”* (Tirmidhi, Sawm, 44)

He also liked to fast on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of lunar months (which are called *ayyām biḍ*) and advised his companions to do the same. Ibn ‘Abbas (r.a.) expresses how regular the Prophet (pbuh) was about fasting on *ayyām biḍ* in the following saying:

“Our Prophet (pbuh) did not leave fasting on *ayyām biḍ* neither when he was at home nor when he was on a journey.” (Nasai, Sawm, 70) In *ayyām biḍ*, which are the days of a full moon, water in the human body rises because of the moon’s increasing force of gravity, and consequently humans are more inclined to follow their selfish desires during those days. Fasting, which is the best device to control the inner self and the strongest shield against the sins,



becomes the best and the most effective solution to calm humans during those days.³⁶

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) encouraged his followers to fast for six days in the month of Shawwāl and stated its merits as follows:

“He/she who observed the fast of Ramadan and then followed it with six (fasts) of Shawwal would be as if he/she fasted the entire year.” (Muslim, Siyām, 204)

Fasting in the month of Shawwāl plays a completing role for those who have not had the chance to get the proper benefit from the month of Ramadan.

36. Because in those days mornings are enlightened by the Sun and the nights by the Moon for the whole day, they are called “*ayyām biḍ* or white days.” Today the effects of the Moon upon human beings have been a subject of scientific research. According to discoveries of contemporary scientists, the Moon affects the human body, which is made up of 80% of water, just like it affects the oceans on Earth. In those days the balance of the fluids of the body are disrupted; the systematic operation of the human brain gets unbalanced and the heart beats increase. The full moon may cause serious problems to those who have heart problems and diabetes. And it may disrupt the operation of the nerve cells and break their balance. It is a scientific fact that the full moon has more effects on women. Scientists summarize these effects as follows:

1. Women become more sensitive and inclined to cry easily.
2. Birth rates increase by twenty percent.
3. Full moon disrupts the balance of menstruation and increases bleeding.
4. Because it increases the hormones, it rises the sexual desires.
5. It causes increased migraine pains, and thus women become more stressed.

The changes happening in the human body in those days also causes an increase in crime rate. On the days of the full moon of August 1993, a significant increase was observed in the rate of crimes, hysterical attacks, and suicides in Germany. Psychologists talk about the full moon’s effects on the human psychology. French researcher René Claude Guillot examined the crimes committed in those days and wrote a book about them titled *Full Moon Hysteria*. In his book, he says that “it is possible to confirm the increasing rates of crimes during the days of full moon from not only the French but also the American police reports.” The news which was titled “Full Moon and Crime” and published in the journal of *Bilim ve Teknik* also presents similar findings. “Two Indian scientists announced that the rates of getting poisoned and crimes were increased on the full moon days of 1980 and 1984. Their findings are published in *British Medical Journal*. According to researcher professor C. P. Thakur, the reason for the increase rates of suicide and homicide by poison is the tide waves in the human body. Since the Earth, Moon, and the Sun come into a straight line during the days of the full moon, the moon’s power of gravity upon the human body rises and the level of water in the human body exceeds sixty percent. Physical and spiritual changes caused by increased levels of gravity also increase the tendency of taking poison and committing crimes. The researcher reached these finding by inputting a five-year long police reports to a computer and comparing them with the dates of the full moon.” (<http://www.kalbinsesi.com/konu/dolunay.asp>)

The statement of being considered as if fasting the entire year is based on the principle that good deeds will be rewarded ten-fold.

Fasting on the day of Ashūra is another type of supererogatory fasting. Aisha (r.a.) reported that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had ordered to observe fasting on the day of 'Ashura before the fasting in Ramadan was made obligatory. But when it became obligatory, then he who wished fasted on the day of Ashura, and he who wished did not observe it (on that day). (Muslim, Siyām, 115)

Allah the Almighty saved Moses (pbuh) from Pharaoh and his people on the day of Ashūra. Moses (pbuh) showed his gratitude to Allah by fasting on that day. Then, fasting on that day became a tradition among the people of the Book and the Arabs. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) did not abolish this custom and said about its merits:

"I hope from Allah the Almighty that fasting on the day of Ashūra will become atonement for the sins of previous year." (Tirmidhī, Sawm, 48)

Fasting the day before the feast of sacrifice is also recommended.

We should not neglect the supererogatory fasting after properly observing the obligatory ones, for they are very important means of getting closer to Allah the Almighty.

2. I'tikaf

I'tikaf literally means to insist on something positive or negative, material or spiritual. Terminologically it states the seclusion into a mosque with the intention of performing acts of servitude and getting closer to Allah the Almighty. *I'tikaf* is usually performed during the ten days of the Month of Ramadan. Going into *i'tikaf* means to spend the days by fasting and the nights by prayer and reciting remembrances; thus to devote the entire time in servitude to Allah. Except for absolute necessities, going into *i'tikaf* requires not to leave the mosque for the entire duration of it. It is an act of worship which actually existed in religions prior to Islam.

Sometimes people feel that they are getting away from their Lord due to preoccupations and concerns of daily life. This is why it would be beneficial for a servant to go into seclusion in a mosque and leave all his/her concerns behind. It may not be possible for him/her to perform this act regularly, but he/





she should look for opportunities and go into *i'tikaf* when it is suitable to his/her conditions in accordance with the principle “something which cannot be attained totally should not be left completely.”

Going into seclusion in a mosque bears wonderful results such as concentration, keeping the heart away from daily concerns, dedicating the entire time to the acts of obedience, and possibility of finding the night of Qadr. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) went into *i'tikaf* for the last ten days of Ramadan. He went into *i'tikaf* for the last twenty days of Ramadan in the year he passed away (Bukhari, I'tikaf, 1, 17) and he advises his followers to do the same as his Sunnah.

I'tikaf cannot be observed without fasting. Moreover, believers should go into seclusion in the big mosques. Believers can put up tents or reserve special rooms in the mosques in order to give a chance to others who would like to go into seclusion as well. It has been considered more appropriate for Muslim women to go into seclusion not in the mosques but in their homes.

C. HIS HAJJ OR PILGRIMAGE

“The excellence of that mosque (which the prophets build) is not from earth and stone, but (because) there is no greed or enmity in its builder.”

Rumi, *Mathnawi*, IV, 1139

Pilgrimage is an important act of worship, which consists of acts expressing the unity of Allah and showing gratitude to Him. Islam aims to increase the spiritual and physical power of Muslims by gathering them around the same object. Thus, Islam invites its followers to perform pilgrimage in order to distinguish the sincere believers from the rest. By means of pilgrimage believers get to know and help each other, for people's wishes and desires can be formed only by knowing and seeing each other.

The goal of pilgrimage is to glorify Allah's religion. It is to follow the tradition of the Prophet Abraham and to remember the blessings of Allah the Almighty.

Pilgrimage is the best way to manifest respect to Allah's house. Since the Ka'bah is one of the signs of Allah, showing respect to it means showing



respect to Allah the Almighty. This is why going to pilgrimage is Allah's right upon all believers who have the means. This is stated in the following verse:

“... And pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds.” (Al-i Imran 3; 97)

Ibn Atā (q.s.) explains **“who is able to undertake the journey to it”** as follows:

“Istata’ah or being able to go to pilgrimage is realized by two things: one of them is the “physical and spiritual state” and the other is the “financial conditions.” Those who have the physical strength should set off for the journey, and then the financial means will find them. The spiritual state shows the strength of love. If love is strong, enthusiasm will be strong, too. Long and difficult roads will become short and easy, when enthusiasm prevails; whereas when there is no enthusiasm, the shortest journeys seem insurmountable. Wherever the soul directs its enthusiasm, the feet will run towards the same direction. If a person does not have the physical and spiritual strength, according to Islamic law his/her ability will be based only on his/her financial strength.

Islam allows those who do not have the means, while it persistently invites those who are able to undertake the journey to perform the pilgrimage. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) called them “the messengers of Allah” in his following saying:

“Those who strive on the path of Allah and perform major and minor pilgrimages are the messengers of Allah, because Allah invited His servants to do them and they accepted His invitation. In return for this, they ask from Allah, and Allah gives them whatever they want.” (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 5)

The Prophet (pbuh) informs us that all creations in the universe along with human beings participate in the pilgrimage. In this respect, he states that:

“Together with every Muslim all trees, rocks, and earth on his/her right and left join the chanting talbiyahs. This participation continues to this and that direction (Allah’s Messenger pointed to right and left) to the end of the earth.” (Tirmidhī, Hajj, 14)



One should hurry and be enthusiastic about going to pilgrimage and joining the excitement and rapture of diving into the spiritual worlds and being cleansed from sins. Like in every other good deed, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) encouraged his followers to show the same sensitivity in performing hajj as follows:

"Let those who would like to perform pilgrimage hurry up! Because they might get sick, lose their ride, or some other obstacle might arise." (Ibn Hanbal, I, 214)

Pilgrimage is a long and hard journey. This is why a pilgrimage performed just for the sake of Allah purifies the soul from sins just like faith erases the state of disbelief prior to faith. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) expresses this fact as follows:

مَنْ حَجَّ لِلَّهِ فَلَمْ يَزِفْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيَوْمٍ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ

"The Prophet (pbuh) said, "Whoever performs Hajj for Allah's pleasure and does not have sexual relations with his wife, and does not do evil or sins then he will return (after Hajj free from all sins) as if he were born anew." (Bukhari, Hajj, 4)

Our Lord opens several doors of forgiveness and presents many rare opportunities for His servants. And He promised many rewards for those who put these opportunities to good use; whereas there will be dire punishments for those who have the means but do not perform it because of worldly preoccupations. In order to warn such people, the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

"If someone has food and a ride to take him/her to Ka'bah house of Allah, but he/she does not go to pilgrimage, it does not matter whether he/she dies as a Christian or Jew." (Tirmidhī, Hajj, 3)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who has been an excellent exemplar for the entire humanity, performed hajj once after it was made obligatory and showed its every detail to his followers. When the Prophet (pbuh) bade the people farewell, the people called it *"Hajjat al-Wada' or farewell pilgrimage."* (Bukhari, Hajj, 132) But the Prophet (pbuh) called it *"Hajjat al-Islam or Pilgrimage of Islam."* (Haythami, III, 237)

When the Prophet (pbuh) intended to do pilgrimage, he let the people know about it. His companions got prepared to go with him. Everybody was looking for the chance to go with him and do just as the way he would perform the pilgrimage. When this news was heard outside Medina, people from everywhere rushed into Medina. There were a lot of people joining them on the way, too. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) gave them brief information about the pilgrimage and *ihrām*, and then he set out on his journey. There were more than 114,000 people with him. He also took a hundred camels with him to sacrifice.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) told the people everything about the pilgrimage. In his sermon he explained to them the requirements and sunnahs of pilgrimage and *ihrām*. When they reached Dhul-Hulaifa, he addressed the believers in the Valley of Aqiq:

"Tonight a messenger came to me from my Lord and asked me to pray in this blessed valley and to assume ihram for Hajj and 'Umra together." (Bukhari, Hajj, 16) He then prayed two- rak'ahs of *ihrām* prayer there. After saying his thanks and graces to Allah, he prayed saying:

اَللّٰهُمَّ حِجَّةً لَا رِيَاءَ فِيْهَا وَلَا سُمْعَةً

"O Allah! Make this pilgrimage an acceptable and worthy pilgrimage for me with no hypocrisy and show-off in it." (Ibn Majah, Manāsik, 4) He put on his *ihram* in Dhul-Hulaifa and began to chant the *talbiyah*:

لَبَّيْكَ، اَللّٰهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ.
اِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكُ، لَا شَرِيْكَ لَكَ

"O Lord! Here I am at Your service, here I am. Here I am at Your service and You have no partners. Yours alone is all praise and all bounty, and Yours alone is the Sovereignty. You have no partners." (Bukhari, Hajj, 26) Then he said *"whoever among you would like to make his/her intentions for major or minor pilgrimage should do the same."*

Pilgrims put on their *ihrām* at special places called *miqāt* and get ready to enter Mecca. To put on *ihrām* for major and minor pilgrimage is like saying *tabkīr* at the beginning of prayers. It is the perceivable way of sincerity and



reverence and the clear indication of the intention to make pilgrimage. At the same time it symbolizes the obedience to Allah by leaving all kinds of selfish desires, comfort, and habits.

After the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) wore *ihrām* and began to say *talbiyah*, he informed believers that Angel Gabriel had come to him and said:

“O Muhammad! Order your companions to raise your voices during talbiyah, for it is among the signs of pilgrimage.” (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 16)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) led his followers in prayers at every place they passed by. Later people built mosques at those places as a manifestation of their loyalty and love for the Prophet. (Ibn Sa’d, II, 173)

When Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) saw the Ka’bah, the house of Allah, he raised his hands and said the following prayer:

“O Allah! Increase the honor, greatness, goodness, and majesty of Your House. Increase the dignity, beneficence, awe, reverence, and goodness of those who revere it by coming to pilgrimage.” (Ibn Sa’d, II, 173) Then he made his camel kneel down at the door of the Ka’bah.

He put his cloak (*rida*) over his left shoulder and left his right shoulder naked and entered the Mosque. He directly went to *Hajar al-Aswad* (the black stone) and kissed it. He first rubbed his hands on the *Hajar al-Aswad* and then his face. Then, starting from the corner of black stone he began circumambulating the Ka’bah saying,

“³⁷”*اَللّٰهُمَّ اِيْمَانًا بِكَ وَتَضَدِيْقًا بِكِتَابِكَ وَاتِّبَاعًا سُنَّةَ نَبِيِّكَ*” (Haythamī, III, 240) He strutted with short but fast steps in the first three circles. Whenever he came to the corners of *Rukn al-Yamani* and *Hajar al-Aswad*, he recited the following verse:

رَبَّنَا اٰتِنَا فِى الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِى الْاٰخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

“... Our Lord! Grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the chastisement of the Fire.” (al-Baqarah 2; 201) After he completed this part of the circumambulation, he kissed and rubbed his hands

37. * “O Allah! Believing in You; acknowledging Your Book; and following the tradition of Your Messenger”



on the Black Stone, and then rubbed his hands on his face. After that, he went to *Maqam-i Ibrahim* (pbuh)** and performed a two-rak'ah-prayer. Then, he turned back to the Black Stone and touched it and told Umar (r.a.):

“O Umar! You are a strong man. Do not push and oppress the weak people to reach the black stone. Neither get disturbed nor disturb others. If you cannot reach at the black stone because of the crowd, wave your hand like you are touching it and then kiss it. Pass by the black stone saying kalimat al-tawhid and takbirs.” (Haythamī, III, 241; Ibn Hanbal, I, 28)

Then the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) went out from the Ka'bah's Bani Mahzum gate and went to the hillock of Safa. When he came close to it, he recited the verse:

“Behold! Safa and Marwah are among the Symbols of Allah...”

(al-Baqarah 2; 158)

He said, *“I am beginning from the first one mentioned in this verse”* and he went to the hillock of Safa to begin *sa'y*. Whenever he saw the House of Allah, he looked at it and pronounced the *kalimat al-tawhid* and *takbir*. He said three or seven times:

“There is no god but Allah. He has no partners; Naught is as His likeness. Authority belongs to Him; all praises are due to Him. He brings the dead to life and takes the lives. He is the Omnipotent. There is no god but Allah. Allah fulfilled His promise and helped His servant. He alone defeated the armies which came for enmity.” (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 84)

Then he quickly walked down the hillock of Safa towards the hillock of Marwa. He was doing *sa'y* rapidly in the middle of the valley and at his regular speed after that. Meanwhile, he was praying as follows:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ الْأَعَزُّ الْأَكْرَمُ

“Dear Lord! Forgive me and have mercy on me! You are The Most Honorable and the Bountiful.” (Haythamī, III, 248)

When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) reached the hillock of Marwa, he did the same things that he had done on the hillock of Safa. He went between Safa and Marwa seven times and finished his *sa'y* at Marwa. Then he said:





“Whoever has a sacrificial animal with him should stay in the state of ihrām; and whoever does not have a sacrificial animal should take his/her ihrām off and change their hajj (major pilgrimage) to ‘umra (the minor one).” (Muslim, Hajj, 147) Because Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had a sacrificial animal with him, he did not take off his *ihrām*.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stayed in Mecca for four days. On the fifth day he circumambulated the Ka’bah seven times. He then got on his ride after the sun passed, midday. He went to Mina and encamped at Dar al-Imamah. He spent the night at Mina and waited till sunrise. On the morning of the ninth day of Dhu’l Hijjah, he set out towards Arafah. He continued to say *talbiyahs* until he reached Arafah. There he preached his famous Farewell Sermon. He explained what people need to know and the rulings that they would not be responsible for if they do not know. Though the crowd assembled there, he wanted those rulings to be known by entire humanity.

After the sermon Bilal (r.a.) recited the call for prayer. The Prophet (pbuh) combined the noon and afternoon prayers and performed the noon prayer first and then the afternoon prayer. After the prayer he got on his camel Quşwa’ and went to the place of standing on the side of Jabal ar-Rahmah (the Mountain of Mercy). Then he turned to the Qiblah and stood there until the sun set and lost its yellowness.

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) held his camel’s tether with one hand and raised his other hand and made a long prayer. Below is a part from this prayer:

“O Allah! I take refuge in You from the tortures of grave, misgivings of my heart, and from the disorder of the matters. O Allah! I take refuge in You from the disasters brought by winds.

O Allah! Create light in my eye, in my ear, and in my heart. O Allah! Expand my bosom. Make my deeds easy for me. O Allah! I take refuge in You from change of health to sickness, from Your sudden Anger and punishment. O Allah! Take me to the straight path. Forgive my past and future.

O Allah! The One who raises the degrees, send blessings, and the One who created the earth and heavens. Voices of various languages rise up to You and ask their requests from You. My request from You is that remember me in the world of questioning where people of the Earth will forget me.



O Allah! You hear my words, see wherever I am, know everything I do secretly or openly. None I have done is hidden from You. I am helpless and poor. I ask Your help and mercy. I am scared and I admit my mistakes. I ask from You however a desperate person asks from You. I beg You however a sinner begs You. I pray to You just like the prayer of Your servant standing and crying before You in humility, a servant who sacrifices everything for Your sake, a servant who rubs his/her face to earth just for You. Dear Lord! Please do not deprive me of from the acceptance of my prayer. Treat me compassionately and with mercy, the One who is the best to be asked from and the One who is the most generous of the givers."³⁸

Here is another nice prayer made by some friends of Allah at Arafah:

"O Allah! If I am not qualified to reach You, Your Mercy can reach me; because Your mercy can enclose everything. Dear Lord! No matter how great my mistakes are, they are smaller than Your mercy. O Allah the Most Beneficent! Please forgive my mistakes.

O Allah! If You are going to forgive those who obey You, in whom will the sinners take refuge?

I am always in need of You, but You do not need me. You may forgive me as my Creator. Please let me go back from this place as a forgiven servant whose all needs are taken care of and whose all wishes are bestowed upon.

O Allah who gives the needs of the needy! O Allah who knows everything which are thought about by those who keep quiet. O Allah! There is no lord except You to be asked from. There is no creator to be feared except You. O Allah who has no helper or a gatekeeper to be bribed! The One whose generosity increases as much as the requests and needs increase! O Allah! You host every guest. We are Your guests. Please host us in Your Paradise.

O Allah! It is a custom to give gifts to the visitors, to every caravan, and to everybody who asks. Spiritual rewards are given to those who expect them. We, as a group, have come to Your house. We are standing at this station of pilgrimage. We are here in these blessed places. Our hope is to be blessed by the rewards from You. O Allah! Please do not fail our hopes."³⁹

38. Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidayah*, V, 166-168; Haythamī, III, 252; Ibn Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad*, II, 237; Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā*, I, 337-38

39. Ghazālī, *Iḥyā*, 337-38; Bayḥaqī, *Shuab*, II, 25-26





Some people from the tribe of Najd came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) when he was at Arafah and asked him:

“O Messenger of Allah! How should we perform Hajj? With what will it be complete?” He replied:

“Hajj is Arafah. Whoever comes to Arafah before the dawn prayer on the day of Muzdalifah is considered to have reached the pilgrimage. The days of Mina are three. There is no sin for those who hurry and stay there for just two days. There is no sin either for those who are late.” (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 57)

After the sun set completely, the Prophet (pbuh) moved from Arafah to Muzdalifah with Usamah b. Zayd on the back of the saddle of his camel. There he combined his evening and night prayers together. He first performed the evening prayer and then the night prayer.

Allah’s Messenger stayed in Muzdalifah till the dawn of the next day. He did not leave Muzdalifah until the day was completely lightened up. Meanwhile, he continued to chant *talbiyahs* and prayers.

According to the narration of Abbas b. Mirdas (r.a.), Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) prayed for the forgiveness of his ummah on the day of Arafah. In return for his prayer Allah the Almighty said:

“I forgive your ummah except the oppressors, for I will take the revenge of the oppressed from the oppressor.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“Dear Lord! If you would like, you can give Paradise to the oppressed as a reward and forgive the oppressor.” That night Allah the Almighty did not respond to his prayer. The Prophet (pbuh) repeated his supplication after the dawn prayer in Muzdalifah. When his supplication was responded by Allah positively, the Prophet (pbuh) smiled. Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said:

“O Messenger of Allah! May our mothers and fathers be sacrificed for you. You never smiled at this time of the day. What is the reason for that? Tell us, may Allah make you happy.” He (pbuh) replied:

“When Satan the enemy of Allah heard that my Lord has forgiven all the members of my ummah, he took a bunch of earth from the ground and threw it over his own face. And he began to cry saying “Shame on me! I am perished,



all my efforts are wasted.” Seeing his fear and cry made me smile.” (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 56)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) collected pebbles in Muzdalifah for the lapidation of Satan in Mina. He left Muzdalifah before the sunrise. When he reached the Valley of Muhassar, he told his companions to collect pebbles for the throwing at the jamrahs.⁴⁰ He also told them to hold the pebbles between their fingers and throw them like throwing a slap. Then he showed them how to do it.

The Prophet (pbuh) rode his camel fast in the Valley of Muhassar⁴¹ and reached the big *jamrah* or the Jamrah of Aqabah.

All three *jamrahs* are in Mina. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) performed the Jamrah of Aqabah after the sunrise on the Day of Sacrifice. This *jamrah* is at the end of Mina, while the small and middle *jamrahs* are close to the Mosque of Hayf.

One of the wisdoms behind the pebbles of the *jamrah* is to not forget the number of the seven *takbirs*. It is similar to count the remembrances with the help of the knuckles of the fingers at the end of ritual prayers.

While Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was holding the pebbles between his thumb and index fingers and throwing them one by one; the pilgrims began to do the same. But it was getting crowded and people were knocking each other over. Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) told them:

“O People! Do not stampede and kill each other! When you would like to throw pebbles at jamrahs, choose the small ones and throw them between your fingers.” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 379)

Qudamah b. Abdullah (r.a.) talks about the Prophet’s state at the moment as follows:

40. **Jamrah:** literally means small pebbles, ember, and cinder. Here it means one of the stations of pilgrimage where small pebbles are thrown. This is performed by throwing a certain number of small pebbles in three places called small jamrah, middle jamrah, and the Jamrah of Aqabah.
41. Valley of Muhassar is the valley where Abraham’s army was destroyed. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) passed through that valley quickly and advised his followers to do the same in places where Allah’s anger manifested itself.





“I saw the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) throwing pebbles on his camel. There were no pushing, no hitting, and no shouting “move away, move away”” (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 66)

The Prophet (pbuh) slaughtered sixty three camels for himself, one for each year of his life, and then he gave the knife to Ali (r.a.) and he slaughtered the rest of the camels. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) ordered to be given a piece from the camel meat. Then, he asked that the pieces to be cooked in pots. He and Ali (r.a.) ate from it. After that the Prophet (pbuh) ordered Ali (r.a.) to distribute the rest of the camel meat, skin, and hair among the poor.

After he slaughtered the camels, the Prophet (pbuh) called his barber and got a haircut. He prohibited a total haircut for women saying: “*There is no haircut for women but just trimming.*” (Darimī, Manasik, 63)

On the first day of the Feast of Sacrifice before noon, the Prophet (pbuh) went to the Ka’bah to perform *tawāf ifāda* (the obligatory circumambulation). After circumambulation, he performed the noon prayer. Then he went to the Zamzam Well. Towards the end of that day, he returned back to Mina. He spent the nights of next three days (*days of tashriq*) there. From time to time he also went to the Ka’bah for circumambulation.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) walked from the Mina Mosque to the first *jamrah* for the second and third days of the Feast of Sacrifice. On the third day, he threw the pebbles of the third day, and left Mina for Muhassab. When people were wandering around Muhassab, he said:

“*Nobody should go anywhere except heading for Ka’bah.*” (Muslim, Hajj, 379; Dar’im, Manasik, 85) On the fourteenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah, he announced that they were going to go to Ka’bah before the dawn prayer. And then he went to Ka’bah and performed the farewell circumambulation.

Meanwhile, someone came and asked about staying in Mecca. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) replied:

“*Mecca is not a place for encamping. The time to stay Mecca after finishing the rituals of pilgrimage is three days for those who come from outside.*” (Ibn Hanbal, IV, 339)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) showed great reverence to the sacred territory of Ka’bah. Whenever he needed to eat something or to relieve himself, he



would go outside and go to a far place. He would not stay in there for a long time so as not to get tired; because it is better to live outside the sacred territory of Ka'bah and long for it than to live close to it and get tired of it.

After the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and the believers performed the farewell circumambulation, they set out to Medina. (Bukhari, Hajj, 21, 70, 128; Muslim, Hajj, 147; Ibn Majah, Manasik, 84)

Hajj is such an act of worship that is full of memories of the earlier prophets and signs that remind us of the Hereafter. Every ritual of pilgrimage has a deep meaning. This is why Muhammad Parsa (q.s.) narrates from Shibli (q.s.) that he likens hajj to Judgment Day as follows:

“Hajj reminds the believers of Judgment Day. It represents leaving someone's home, household members, friends, and town. It also represents the states of illnesses, troubles, and death. Arriving at the place of *miqāt* resembles the blowing of *Sūr*. Pilgrims take off their worldly clothes and go into the world of Hereafter. The proclamations of *labbayk* are like responding the caller of Judgment Day. Running to Arafah is a sign of running in the field of Ararat and gathering in the plain of Arafah is the exemplar of assembling on Judgment Day. Standing on the Mount of Mercy is the representation of standing before Allah the Almighty. Flowing from Arafah to Muzdalifah (*mashar' i haram*) is like going from the first court to the highest court. Going to Mecca to make the visiting circumambulation is to go to see the face of the Beloved. Kissing the Black Stone is to renew and fulfill the covenant with Allah. Farewell circumambulation is similar to leaving the assembly place of Judgment Day and going to the eternal places. Filling the cups with zamzam water represents the believers' drinking from the pool of Kawthar in Paradise. Slaughtering animals likens to death between Hell and Paradise. Getting a haircut and opening heads represents that every secret will be revealed on the Day of Judgment.”

(*Tevhide Giriş*, p. 241-44)

Because the Prophet (pbuh) made his intention to perform *Hajj-i Qiran*,⁴² he also performed the minor pilgrimage (*umrah*) while performing the major pilgrimage (*hajj*). He performed a total of four minor pilgrimages in his life.

42. Hajj can be performed in three ways. 1. **Hajj-i Ifrad**: Intending to perform just major pilgrimage 2. **Hajj-i Qirān**: Performing major and minor pilgrimage together with the same *ihrām*. 3. **Hajj-i Tamattu'**: Performing major and minor pilgrimage together but with separate *ihrāms*.





Even though the minor pilgrimage is not an obligatory act of worship, but a sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh), Allah's Messenger was very attentive about its performance. In respect to the virtues of umrah, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

"Perform hajj and umrah consecutively. Because performing them consecutively purifies the sins and poverty like a bellow cleanses the rust from iron." (Ibn Majah, Manasik, 3)

"Allah's Apostle said, "(The performance of) 'Umra is an expiation for the sins committed (between it and the previous one). And the reward of Hajj Mabrur (the one accepted by Allah) is nothing except Paradise." (Bukhari, 'Umra, 1)

He promised more rewards for performing umrah in the month of Ramadan as follows:

"Perform 'Umra when Ramadan comes, for 'Umra in Ramadan is equal to Hajj (in reward), or said something similar." (Bukhari, 'Umra, 4)

The story of a conversation mentioned by Ibn 'Arabī's (q.s.) in his book *al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyyah* between Sheikh Shiblī (may Allah have mercy on his soul) and his friend is a wonderful manifestation of the spiritual depth of pilgrimage:

Shiblī: Have you made your intention and put on your ihrām?

His friend: Yes, I have.

Shiblī: Have you annul all your intentions except your intention for pilgrimage?

His friend: No, I have not.

Shiblī: Then, you have not made your intention for hajj. Did you take off your clothes to put on ihrām?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Like you took off your clothes, did you take the worldly affairs and everything other than Allah from your heart?

His friend: No, I did not.



Shiblī: Then, you have not entered into the state of *ihrām*. Have you cleaned yourself?

His friend: Yes, I have.

Shiblī: Have all your deficiencies been cured with it?

His friend: No, they have not.

Shiblī: Then you have not been cleansed. Did you pronounce *talbiyah*?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Have you received any response for your *talbiyah*?

His friend: No, I have not.

Shiblī: Then you have not properly said *talbiyah*. Did you enter the sacred territory (*Haram*)?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: While you were entering it, have you really believed in that you have given up all the unlawful things?

His friend: No, I have not.

Shiblī: Then you did not enter the sacred territory. After that did you come close to blessed city of Mecca?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: When you got close to Mecca, did you receive any spiritual state from Allah the Almighty?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not get close to Mecca. Did you enter the Ka'bah?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you get closer to Allah as you started to know Him?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not enter the Mosque. Have you seen the Ka'bah?

His friend: Yes, I have.





Shiblī: Did you see through the Ka’bah the thing that you intended to see?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you have not seen the Ka’bah. Did you perform seven *ramls* and *mashys*? Or did you sometimes run and sometimes calmly walk around the Ka’bah?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you thank Allah the Most Glorious by breaking your ties with the world?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not perform *raml*. Did you greet Hajar al-Aswad and kiss it?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: (when Shiblī got this respond, he began to tremble) Come to your senses! Do you know what you are saying? Those who greet the Black Stone actually greet Allah the Almighty. They enter the circle of mercy. Has this happened to you?

His friend: No, it has not.

Shiblī: Then you did not greet it. Have you stood in the presence of Allah and performed two rak’ahs of prayer?

His friend: Yes, I have.

Shiblī: Did you realize that you were in the presence of Allah?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you neither stood nor performed prayer. Did you go up the hillock of Safa?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: What did you do?

His friend: I pronounced takbirs seven times, thought about my pilgrimage, and hoped that Allah would accept it.



Shiblī: Did you say your takbirs like the angels do? And did you understand the real meaning of takbir?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Did you descend from Safa?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Have all your spiritual diseases been cured, and have you become healthy?

His friend: No, I have not.

Shiblī: Then you neither ascended nor descended from Safa. Did you run after that?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you run away from your inner self and reach Allah?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not run. Did you arrive at the hillock of Marwa?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you feel a state of solemnity and tranquility?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not reach Marwa. Did you go to Mina?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you ask for forgiveness from Allah for your rebellion?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not go to Mina. Did you enter the Mosque of Hayf?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you fear Allah while you were entering and going out of the mosque? And did you find similar fear in yourself at other times?

His friend: No, I did not.





Shiblī: Then you did not do anything there, either. Did you go up Arafah? Did you stand there?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you understand the state of your creation and did you realize what your future would be?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not fulfill your Arafah duty. Did you go down to Muzdalifah? Did you see the Mashari Harām?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you remember Allah in such a state that you forgot yourself and the whole world?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not stay at Muzdalifah. Did you, then, go to Mina and slaughter a sacrifice?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you sacrifice your inner self?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not slaughter anything. Did you throw pebbles at the jamrahs?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you throw your ignorance and get knowledge in return?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not throw the *jamrahs*. Did you then get a haircut?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you pull and throw away your desires and wishes related to this world?

His friend: No, I did not.



Shiblī: Then you did not succeed in this either. Did you perform the visiting circumambulations?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: During this visit, did any spiritual realities and miracles appear to you? Because Allah's Messenger (pbuh) says that, *"Pilgrims are the visitors of Allah. And the one who is visited should offer something to his visitors."*

His friend: No, nothing happened.

Shiblī: Then you did not visit it. Did you then take off your *ihrām* and begin to live a regular life and return to the lawful things?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Have you been determined to eat lawful food from that time on?

His friend: No, I have not been.

Shiblī: Then you did not return to lawful things. Did you bid farewell after that?

His friend: Yes, I did.

Shiblī: Did you bid farewell completely with your soul to your lower self?

His friend: No, I did not.

Shiblī: Then you did not bid farewell. You need to perform your pilgrimage again. Be careful how you perform your pilgrimage from now on. I have taught you how to perform hajj. Try to perform your hajj just like the way I have taught you." (Ibn Arabī, *Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah*, X, 133-38)

In short, an acceptable pilgrimage, or to perform the major and minor pilgrimages together and try to perform the minor pilgrimage as often as possible, is an important act of worship through which Divine mercy can be attained. In order to dive into the sea of Divine mercy we should obey our excellent exemplar, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), perform our worship carefully, and stay away from bad deeds and speech.





D. HIS CHARITY AND ALMSGIVING

“And nothing do you spend in the least (in His Cause) but He replaces it: for He is the Best of those who grant Sustenance.”

(Sebe’ 34; 39)

Regulating the social order and balancing the harmony of the society from the point of wealth and poverty widely depends on giving charity in society. Just like the existence of the wealthy, there also exist weak and destitute people in the society. Those who have the means should look for those who are in need, feel the pain of the poor, and help them as much as he/she can just for the sake of Allah.

Because of its significance, charity is among the most encouraged acts of worship in the Qur’an and in the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh). As a blessing to His servants Allah the Almighty showed many ways of charity and made them easy. In this respect, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, *“If a man spends on his family (with the intention of having a reward from Allah) sincerely for Allah’s sake then it is a kind of alms-giving in reward for him.”* (Bukhari, Iman, 41) Here is another prophetic saying in this regard, *“Never a Muslim plants a tree, but he has the reward of charity for him, for what is eaten out of that is charity; what is stolen out of that, what the beasts eat out of that, what the birds eat out of that is charity for him. (In short) none incurs a loss to him but it becomes a charity on his part.”* (Muslim, Musaqāt, 7)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) became an example for his ummah and lived a generous life. His companions imitated him and narrated his blessed life to us. The Prophet’s disposal of his property is based on the principle of charity. His view to worldly property was also from the perspective of giving in charity. As a matter of fact, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) considered the things that he gave in charity as his real possession. His happiness for helping others was greater than the happiness of the receiver of his charity.

The Prophet (pbuh) considered the life in this world as a field to get ready for the life of the Hereafter; because the return for the actions done in this world will certainly be seen in the Hereafter. This is why we should try to increase our capital for the afterlife in the extent of the Lord’s blessings bestowed upon us. Abu Dhar’s (r.a.) following experience shows clearly how the Prophet (pbuh) viewed the life in this world and worldly possessions:



I was walking with the Prophet (pbuh) in Harra district of Medina. We saw the Uhud Mountain on our way. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told me:

"O Abu Dhar!" I replied:

"Yes, O Messenger of Allah! What is it?"

The Prophet (pbuh) said:

"Nothing is more delighting to me than this that Uhud should be of gold for me, and no dinar is left with me out of it before three nights pass except a dinar which I would set aside for the repayment of debt upon me." (Muslim, Zakāt, 3) Then he continued:

إِنَّ الْأَكْثَرِينَ هُمْ الْأَقْلُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"Those who are rich in this world would have little reward in the Hereafter except those who spend their money here and there (in Allah's Cause), and they are few in number." (Muslim, Zakat, 32; Bukhari, Istiqraḍ, 3)

The Prophet (pbuh) got many properties and lands from the war booty, but he endowed some of them for the benefit of the believers (Ibn Sa'd, I, 501-503), gave some in charity to the needy, and spent a part of it for the expenses of the Muslim army. The Prophet's fearless donations were the result of his endless trust and confidence in the Lord Almighty. In fact once the Prophet (pbuh) said:

"Allah said, 'Spend (O man), and I shall spend on you.'" He also said, "Allah's Hand is full, and (its fullness) is not affected by the continuous spending night and day." He also said, "Do you see what He has spent since He created the Heavens and the Earth? Nevertheless, what is in His Hand is not decreased, and His Throne was over the water; and in His Hand there is the balance (of justice) whereby He raises and lowers (people)." (Bukhari, Tafsiṛ, 11: 2; Tawhīd, 22) In this way, the Prophet (pbuh) informed us not to fear from giving charity.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh), who never attached too much importance to worldly possessions, was the most generous of the people. In this respect, Musa b. Anas reported on the authority of his father:





It never happened that when Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was asked for something for the sake of Islam that he did not give it. A person came to him and he gave him a large flock (of sheep and goats) and he went back to his people and said:

"My people, embrace Islam, for Muhammad gives so much charity as if he has no fear of want." (Muslim, Faḍail, 57-58)

Another report about this lofty characteristic of the Prophet (pbuh) is below:

"Some Ansari people asked for something from Allah's Apostle (pbuh) and he gave it to them. They again asked him for something and he again gave it to them. And then they asked from him and he gave it to them again till all that was with him finished. And then he said,

"If I had anything else, I would not keep it away from you. Remember whoever abstains from asking others, Allah will make him contented, and whoever tries to make himself self-sufficient, Allah will make him self-sufficient. And whoever remains patient, Allah will make him patient. Nobody can be given a blessing better and greater than patience." (Bukhari, Zakāt, 50; Muslim, Zakāt, 124)

We need to comprehend the meaning of the verse **"Allah receives their gifts of Charity"** (al-Tawba 9; 104), to observe the dignity of the receiver of our charity, and to treat them kindly. In our society there are both those who are in need but cannot openly tell their needs because of their modesty and those who can easily speak about their needs. We should not hurt their feelings and we should deal with them kindly. As it was stated in his saying, *"I am not stingy"* (Muslim, Zakāt, 127), the Prophet (pbuh) was distinguished by his generosity. He would never like to send anybody empty handed. If he had something to give, he would give it; if he did not have anything, he would treat the needy people kindly and promise that he would help them as soon as he got something. Allah the Almighty asks the believers to act similarly in the following verse:

"And even if you have to turn away from them pursuit of the mercy from your Lord which you do expect, yet speak to them a word of easy kindness." (al-Isra 17; 28)

Imam Buṣiri elegantly expresses this attribute of the Prophet (pbuh) in the following lines from *Qasidah Burdah*:



نَبِيْنَا الْاِمْرِ التَّاهِي فَلَا اَحَدٌ اَبَرَّ فِي قَوْلٍ «لَا» مِنْهُ وَلَا «نَعَم»

“Our Prophet (pbuh) is the one who commands the right and forbids the wrong. There is nobody who says “no” or “yes” nicer than him.”

1. Hurrying in Giving Charity

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would not store wealth; he would give the excess amount, after he met his obligatory needs. He recommended his followers to give the excess amount of their needs to the poor in order to be rich in the Hereafter. He also advised that those who think about the afterlife and who would like to face an easy Judgment Day that they be the giving hand in his following saying:

“Abu Umama reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying: O son of Adam, it is better for you if you spend your surplus wealth, but if you withhold it, it is evil for you. There is, however, no reproach for you if you withhold means necessary for a living. And begin charity with your dependants; and the upper hand is better than the lower hand.” (Muslim, Zakāt, 97) Because there is no better preparation for the Hereafter more blessed than charity. The expert Arabic man of letters Harirī addresses to those who would like to get ready for the Hereafter by giving charity to others saying:

“O the wealthy who walk in fur! Whoever is blessed by wealth should donate it to the needy, and those who have the means should help the others, for the world is brutal and the time is disloyal. Power and ability are like a dream; and opportunity looks like a summer cloud. By Allah I would spend the winter for getting ready.” (Maqamāt, p. 188)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) personally lived according to what he taught and was a living manifestation of the Qur’an. Our Prophet (pbuh) would hurry in all kinds of good deeds especially charity. He did not like to quit in completing a good deed because of an obstacle. One of the nice examples in this regard is narrated by ‘Uqbah b. Ḥārith:

“I performed the afternoon prayer with the Prophet and after we finished the prayer he got up quickly and went to one of his wives’ room. When he came out, he noticed the signs of astonishment on the faces of the people that was caused by his rush. He then explained it saying:





“I remembered while I was in my prayer that a piece of gold was lying in my house and I disliked that it should remain with us throughout the night, and so I have ordered it to be distributed.” (Bukhari, Adhān, 158)

The significance of charity increases in a society where there are too many people in need. Being merciful, which is an attribute that all believers must have, does not let a believer to be oblivious of the pains of the poor. This is why the Prophet (pbuh) would prefer the needy over himself and gave them whatever he had. Especially when he saw someone who was clearly in need, he would feel his/her hardship and try to take care of his/her needs. Mundhir b. Jarir reported on the authority of his father:

“While we were in the company of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in the early hours of the morning, some people came there who were barefooted, naked, wearing ripped woolen clothes, or cloaks, with their swords hung around their necks. Most of them, nay, all of them, belonged to the tribe of Mudar. The color of the face of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) underwent a change when he saw them in poverty. He then entered his house and came out. He then asked Bilal to pronounce *adhan*. Bilal pronounced *adhan* and *iqama*, and the Prophet (pbuh) observed prayer along with his companion and then addressed them reciting verses of the Holy Qur’an:

“O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women. Be careful of your duty toward Allah in Whom you claim (your rights) of one another, and toward the wombs (that bare you). Lo! Allah hath been a Watcher over you.”

(al-Nisa 4; 1)

He then recited a verse from surah al-Hashr:

“O you who believe! Observe your duty to Allah. And let every soul look to that which it has sent on before for the morrow. And observe your duty to Allah! Lo! Allah is informed of what you do.” (al-Hashr 59; 18).

Then the audience began to vie with one another in giving charity. Some donated a dinar, others a dirham, still others clothes, some donated a sa’ of wheat, some a sa’ of dates; till the Holy Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Bring even if it is half a date.”



Then a person from among the Ansar came there with a bag of food which his hands could scarcely lift; in fact, they could not lift. Then the people followed continuously, till I saw two heaps of eatables and clothes, and I saw the face of the Messenger (pbuh) glistening like gold on account of joy. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“He who sets a good precedent in Islam, there is a reward for him for this (act of goodness) and reward of that also who acted according to it subsequently, without any deduction from their rewards; and he who sets in Islam an evil precedent, there is upon him the burden of that, and the burden of him also who acted upon it subsequently, without any deduction from their burden.” (Muslim, Zakāt, 69)

On the day that our beloved Prophet (pbuh) passed away, Aisha (r.a.) had six or seven dinars. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had ordered her to distribute them to the poor. Because Aisha (r.a) had been busy with the health of the Prophet (pbuh), she had not had the chance to fulfill that order. When the Prophet (pbuh) woke up, he asked Aisha (r.a.):

“What have you done with the dinars? Did you distribute them?” Aisha (r.a.) replied:

“No, I did not, because I was busy with taking care of you.” The Prophet (pbuh) asked that the dinars to be brought to him. Then he held them in his hands and said:

“What would be the state of Muhammad the Messenger of Allah, if he meets his Lord while having these dinars?” Then he distributed them among five families from Anṣar and said:

“Now I feel relieved,” and began to sleep. (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 104; Ibn Sa’d, II, 237-238)

In this respect, Imam Qastallanī says that:

“If the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who is the most beloved Apostle of Allah, who is the greatest of all prophets, and whose all mistakes, past and future, are already forgiven, thinks like this, than you should think about what the state of those who violated others rights and committed many sins would be when they meet Allah the Almighty!” (Qastallanī, II, 480-81)





2. Rewards for Charity

Allah the Almighty opens several doors from unexpected places for those who help the needy. Even though it may seem like charity decreases the amount of wealth, it actually does not decrease but adds blessings and abundance to it. It is like trimming branches of a tree, which makes it strong and fruitful. Qays b. Sal' (r.a.) narrates:

“My brothers complained about me to the Prophet (pbuh) that I was throwing my wealth. I told the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

“O Messenger of Allah! I take my share of dates and then give it to the people as charity and for the sake of Allah.” The Prophet (pbuh) touched my chest and said three times:

“Give in charity, so Allah will give you.” After this incident, whenever I attended an expedition, I had a ride, while others were walking. I was also the wealthiest among them.” (Haythamī, III, 128)

In another hadith, the Prophet (pbuh) said *“There are three characteristics that I can swear by them”* and then he counted them as follows:

“Servants’ wealth does not decrease by giving in charity. Allah increases the honor of those who are patient against the injustices they faced. Allah opens the door of poverty for those who open the door of begging.” (Tirmidhī, Zuhd, 17)

Giving in charity not because of hypocrisy or to show-off but for the sake of Allah strengthens human beings spiritually and physically. In this respect, the Prophet (pbuh) talked about the creation of the earth and how mountains were fixed on the earth to make it stronger. Angels were astonished by the strength of the mountains and they asked Allah the Almighty whether there was anything stronger than the mountains. Allah the Almighty said that he created iron, fire stronger than iron, then water stronger, and finally the wind as the strongest of them all. He then said that he created human beings stronger than all of them and added:

“If a human being gives charity with his/her right hand and does this so secretly that his left hand does not know about it, he then becomes stronger than all of them.” (Tirmidhī, Tafsir, 113-17)



Allah the Almighty created humans as the most honorable creation. Humans' degrees and honor are ranged among them according to their sincerity while giving charity. Those who give their charity secretly and modestly are the greatest of them and have the highest rank.

Those who get strength through charity will also be protected and helped by the Lord the Almighty. It is certain that those who give charity for the sake of Allah will receive various blessings from Allah the Almighty and will never be deprived. The Prophet (pbuh) tells the following exemplary story about the blessings of charity:

"While a person was in the wilderness he heard a voice from the cloud commanding it thus: Irrigate the garden of so and so. After that the clouds slinked aside and poured water on a stony ground. It filled a channel amongst the channels of that land and that person followed that water and he found a person standing in the garden busy in changing the course of water with the help of a hatchet. He said to him:

"Servant of Allah, what is your name?" He said:

"So and so." And it was that very name which he had heard from the clouds. And he said to him:

"Servant of Allah, why do you ask me my name?" He said:

"I heard a voice from the clouds pouring the rain, saying: Water the garden of so and so like your name. What have you done for the favor shown to you by Allah in this matter? He said:

"Now as you state so. I calculate the yield I get from my garden. And I give one-third as charity out of it and I and my children eat one-third of it and one-third I keep it as seed." (Muslim, Zuhd, 45)

This fortunate man received unique blessings from Allah the Almighty in such an arid place like the desert just because of his generosity. Thus, he could water his garden and get bountiful yields.

Human beings cannot stay away from sins and mistakes. And it is a fact that these sins and mistakes may attract Allah's anger. Charity and almsgiving, on the other hand, attract the Divine mercy and put out Allah's anger. They cause the punishment determined for stinginess to be forgiven and make the residents of heaven pray for that servant. For the reason that, the blessings of





these prayers attains the happiness of leaving this world in faith. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said that:

“Charity extinguishes the Lord’s anger and eliminates an awful death.”
(Tirmidhī, Zakat, 28)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), on the one hand, encouraged charity, and on the other hand prohibited begging strongly and stated its material and spiritual harms. This is why he advised his ummah to be dignified and patient.

3. Prophet’s Manners in Giving Charity

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) gave his companions the best training about charity, as he did in disciplining them in every aspect of life, and so they became the most generous people in the world. One of those blessed people (may Allah be pleased with them all) came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to ask him the best and most rewarding way of giving charity:

“O Messenger of Allah, which charity is the best? Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“That you should give charity in a state when you are healthy and close-fisted, one haunted by the fear of poverty, hoping to become rich charity in such a state of health and mind is the best. And you must not defer charity to such a length that you are about to die and then say: This is for so and so, and this is for so and so. It has already come into the possession of your so and so inheritors.” (Muslim, Zakāt, 92) Thus, he stated that charity given during the times of hardship is more valuable than the charity given during the times of comfort and free from the concerns.

Our Prophet (pbuh) advised his companions to be generous and to give without feeling worry. In addition, he said:

“Spend according to your means; Do not withhold your money by counting it (i.e. hoarding it), for if you did so, Allah would also withhold His blessings from you.” (Bukharī, Kitāb al-Zakat, 21; Muslim, Kitāb al-Zakat, 88) Thus, he expressed that stingy people would only harm themselves by their own acts.

According to the terms of the treaty signed in Hudaibiyah with the polytheists of Quraish, a year had passed and it was time for umrah. In the month



of Dhu al-Qa'dah from the seventh year of *hijrah*, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) commanded to all those who had attended the expedition of Hudaibiyah to get ready for a minor pilgrimage. People were also informed to get ready by announcements. Arabs who came from the vicinity and who were in Medina at the time said:

"By Allah! O Messenger of Allah (pbuh)! We neither have food nor anybody who can give us food." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked the residents of Medina to give them charity and to help them. He also told them that if they did not help, they would be perished." Upon this the Medinans said:

"O Messenger of Allah (pbuh)! What can we give as charity? We cannot find anything." The Prophet (pbuh):

"Whatever you have, even if it is half a date..." (Waqidi, II, 732)

This shows that generosity does not mean giving much, but the real generosity is to give in the extent of one's means and to make charity a habit.

Companions who took the Prophet (pbuh) as their example in generosity manifested wonderful scenes of charity and almsgiving. On the day that the Prophet (pbuh) invited Muslims to help the Muslim army, which was going to the expedition of Tabuk, Ulbah b. Zayd (r.a.), who was a poor companion of the Prophet (pbuh), woke up in the middle of the night, performed prayer, and begged:

"O Allah! You ordered and encouraged us to go to battles. But you did not give me a ride to go to the battle with Your Messenger. You did not give a ride to Your Messenger to supply me with. I have always given my charity from my property, body, and possessions. O Allah! I am giving these things that you have bestowed upon me as charity."

In the morning he went to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

"O Messenger of Allah! I have nothing to give as charity except this. I also forgive those who hurt my feelings, say bad things about me, or tease me because of this. Upon these loving, forgiving, and merciful words Our Prophet (pbuh) said:

"May Allah accept your charity." And he could not say anything else. The next day a teller announced:





“Where is the person who gave you his charity yesterday?” Nobody appeared. The Prophet (pbuh) asked:

“*Where is that person who gave in charity yesterday?*” Nobody stood up. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) repeated:

“*Whoever is that person let him stand up?*” Ulbah (r.a.) stood up. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) told him:

“*I accepted your charity. By Allah, in whose power is Muhammad’s being, you are written into the registers of those whose charities have been accepted.*” (Ibn Hajar, *Al-Iṣābah*, II, 500; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Sirah*, IV, 9; Waqidī, III, 994)

In order to follow the orders of the Prophet (pbuh) and adorn themselves with the beautiful attribute of generosity, companions presented the merit of giving everything they possessed as charity. Virtues presented by those who had very few possessions are much more exemplary for us.

An Ansari, Abu Aqil (r.a.), brought a measure of dates to the army which was on its way to Tabuk, although he needed the dates more than anybody else. He said:

“O Messenger of Allah! I carried water on my back for the entire night and earned two measures of date. I kept one of them for my family and brought the other one to you to gain my Lord’s contentment.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“*May Allah bless both what you brought and what you kept at home*” and ordered the dates to be put into the rest of donations. (Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, X, 251)

Allah’s Apostle said, “*If one gives in charity what equals one date-fruit from the honestly-earned money and Allah accepts only the honestly earned money --Allah takes it in His right (hand) and then enlarges its reward for that person who has given it so much as that it becomes as big as a mountain*” (Bukhari, Zakāt, 8) Therefore, charities are guaranteed investments for our eternal life in the Hereafter. These donations will be enlarged by Allah the Almighty based on sincerity, and they will mediate for the donors for all kinds of severities of Judgment Day.

In the Age of Happiness, companions of the *Suffa* did not have time to earn their livelihood, for they devoted their entire time for Islam and for worshipping Allah. This is why other believers would bring date-fruit to them. On



one occasion some people brought spoilt dates to them. Because the companions of Suffa were very hungry, they had to eat them. Upon this incident the following verse was revealed:

“O you who believe! Spend of the good things which you have earned, and of that which We bring forth from the earth for you, and seek not the bad (with intent) to spend thereof (in charity) when you would not take it for yourselves save with disdain; and know that Allah is Absolute, Owner of Praise.” (al-Baqara 2; 267) (Wahidī, p. 90)

In fact, a person’s intention and mood are very important while spending for the sake of Allah. Those who consume the best quality of the things abundantly for their own needs and desires while they give reluctantly from the worst and cheapest parts as charity should know that they are showing their own value in the presence of Allah the Almighty.

Ibn ‘Arabī (q.s.) narrates:

“A poor sufi asked from a man to give him charity for the sake of Allah. The man took out of a purse which was filled with various sizes of silver coins. Then he began to look for a small change. The poor sufi was watching him. Then he turned to me and asked:

“Do you know what this man is looking for?” I said:

“No, I do not.” He then said:

“He is looking for his state in the presence of Allah the Almighty, because he will give for the sake of Allah. And whenever he finds a large coin, he is changing his mind. In a way with his body language he is saying that “he does not have such value in the presence of Allah.” He will continue his search until he finds a small coin.

When the man found a small coin and gave it to the poor sufi, the poor sufi told him that:

“Your value in the presence of Allah is as much as this money.” (Nihat Keklik, p. 172)

Those who internalize Islam and apply it to their lives have known the significance and benefits of charity in Islam and have tried to manifest it in their lives. Among them were both those who had very little property and those who benefited from all kinds of blessings of the world. One of them





was the twenty seventh sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Mahmud I, who was personally inscribing seals and selling them. He was giving his earnings to the poor as charity. Thus, he was sincerely giving the purest and most lawful part of his earnings as charity. (Zeki Kuşoğlu, p. 26)

E. HIS PREOCCUPATION WITH THE HOLY QUR'AN

“...they rehearse the Signs of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves in adoration”

(Al-i Imrān 3; 113)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) showed the utmost reverence and attention to the Book of his Lord. He incessantly recited it with awe and longing. Following his tradition, companions, too, never left the Word of Allah from their hands or from their tongues. Aws b. Huzayfa from the tribe of Saqif narrates his observations in this respect:

“One night Allah’s Messenger did not come next to us for a long period after the night prayer. We asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! Why were you so late to come back to the congregation?” He said:

“I have formed a habit of reciting a portion (hizb) from the Qur’an. I did not want to come out before I fulfilled my habit.” In the morning we asked the companions:

“How do you divide the Qur’an into portions (*hizbs*) to read?” They replied:

“We combine the first three chapters of the Qur’an into the first portion; the next five chapters into another portion, the following seven, nine, eleven, and thirteen chapters into different portions. And finally we put the chapters from *surah Qāf* (50) till the end of the Qur’an into another portion, which makes a total of seven portions.” (Ibn Ḥanbal, IV, 9; Ibn Majah, Salāt, 178)

When the Prophet (pbuh) stood in the presence of Allah the Almighty to offer ritual prayer in the middle of the night, he was reciting the Qur’an for hours and he was getting an avid pleasure from it. He stated the wisdom of reciting the Qur’an in his solitary prayers at night as follows:



“Allah would listen to none of His servants as much as He listens to the servant who performs two rak’ahs of prayer and recites the Qur’an at night...” (Tirmidhī, Faḍā’il al-Qur’an, 17)

Recitation of the Qur’an must be letter by letter, with *tartīl*, and in accordance with the rules of the recitation of the Qur’an (or *tajwīd*), for Allah the Almighty ordered His Messenger (pbuh):

وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلاً

“...and recite the Quran in slow, measured rhythmic tones.” (al-Muzzammil 73; 4) Just like all the other orders of Allah, the Prophet (pbuh) followed this order from our Lord with complete obedience and recited the Qur’an as it is required.

Tartīl actually means “order” and “in tune.” In relation to the recitation of the Qur’an it means reciting every letter of the Qur’an slowly and in the way that they are supposed to be recited. In the above mentioned verse, strengthening the imperative verb **“rattil”** with its infinitive form **“tartilan”** points out the Divine request about how well the *tartil* of the Qur’an must be. Recitation of the Qur’an is not just about beauty of the reciter’s voice. It is not like singing a song. On the contrary, it means feeling the eloquence, rhetoric, and the relation between verses and their meanings as much as possible while reciting the Qur’an. This is why *tartīl* and *tajwīd* are very important in reading the Qur’an.

Our Prophet (pbuh), whose entire life was passed by receiving Divine revelations and conveying them to humanity, paid extra attention to the Qur’an in the month of Ramadan. Angel Gabriel (pbuh) would meet him every night during the month of Ramadan, and they recited the Qur’an to each other. (Muslim, Faḍā’il, 50) Even though they had done this once a year, they did it twice in the year the Prophet (pbuh) passed away. (Bukharī, Faḍā’il al-Qur’an, 7)

Just like he enjoyed recitation of the Qur’an, the Prophet (pbuh) also enjoyed listening to other’s recitation. This is why he would especially go and listen to the readers of the Qur’an among his companions. It is narrated by Abdullah bin Masud:

“Allah’s Apostle said to me,





“Recite the Qur’an for me,” I told him,

“Shall I recite it to you although it had been revealed to you?” He said,

“I like to hear the Qur’an from others.” So I recited Surah al-Nisa’ till I reached:

“How will it be then when We bring from each nation a witness, and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people?” (al-Nisā 4; 41) Then he said, *“Stop!”* And behold, his eyes were overflowing with tears.” (Bukharī, Tafsīr, 4/9; Muslim, Musāfirūn, 247)

Since the eyes of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would overflow with tears when listening to the Qur’an, then it would only be more appropriate for Muslims to contemplate, and show respect to the Qur’an and to be in between a state of fear of Allah and hope of His mercy.

Sometimes Allah’s Apostle would secretly listen to his companions’ recitation and be filled with joy. In this regard, Aisha (r.a.) narrates the following incident:

One day Aisha (r.a.) was late to meet with the Messenger of Allah. He asked her the reason for her delay and Aisha replied:

“O Messenger of Allah! There was a man in the mosque, that I haven’t seen anybody who can read the Qur’an more beautiful than him.” Upon this response, the Prophet (pbuh) went to mosque and saw that the man was Salim (r.a.). Then he expressed his feelings saying:

“All praises are due to Allah for having a person like you among my people.” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 165)

1. Reading the Qur’an Understandingly

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) placed the Qur’an in all aspects of his life and was identified with it, and presented a living example of it through his good manners. Below is how elegantly the poet Muallim Naci expresses this fact:

“Hüsn-i Kur’ân’ı görür insan olur hayrân sana
Dest-i kudretle yazılmış Hilye’dir Kur’an sana”



“People admire him seeing the eloquence, rhetoric, and beauties of the Qur’an in him. This Qur’an is your hilyah (description of your qualities) which was written by the Hand of Allah in order to praise you and describe your good manners.”

Those who read Allah’s Words actually read about the personal appearance, manners, character, and life of His Messenger (pbuh). This is why believers should occupy themselves with the Qur’an, read it regularly, contemplate its meaning and apply it to their lives. Our Prophet (pbuh) says that:

“Recite the Qur’an, for on the Day of Resurrection it will come as an intercessor for those who recite it...” (Muslim, Musāfirūn, 252)

The Prophet (pbuh) also encouraged his followers to read the Qur’an regularly saying, *“Whoever reads a letter from the Qur’an, a pious deed will be recorded for him/her. For each good deed, there will be ten rewards. I am not saying that alif-lam-mim (الم) is one letter; on the contrary alif is one letter; lām is one letter; and mīm is one letter.”* (Tirmidhī, Faḍāil al-Qur’an, 16) Therefore, it is very important for believers to contemplate and read the Qur’an again and again. The following incident is very important in this respect.

“Once a man came to the Messenger of Allah and asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! Which act is more pleasing?” The Prophet (pbuh) replied:

“The actions of hāl and murtahīl” When the man asked again:

“Who are hāl and murtahīl?” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“They are those who read the Qur’an from the beginning to the end and whenever they come to the end, they restart reading it from the beginning.” (Tirmidhī, Qiraāt, 11)

Even though reading the Qur’an is considered as an act of worship and great spiritual rewards were promised for it, the real object is to understand it, to live in accordance with it, and to convey its message to other people. This is why a person who is reading it should be in a special state of mind. That is to turn respectfully and longingly towards Allah; to think about the admonitions of the Qur’an; to obey sincerely to its rules; to take lessons from its stories and parables; to say *“subhānallah”* every time an attribute of Allah is mentioned; to ask for Allah’s blessings every time Paradise or Allah’s mercy





are stated; and to take refuge in Allah whenever Hell or Allah's punishment are mentioned.

While reading the Qur'an believers should think about how that they are in the presence of Allah and He always sees them. They should be in such a state of mind that their Lord is watching and directly talking to them. While reading the Qur'an they should contemplate about Allah, His attributes, His actions, and His majesty; ask for His forgiveness, mercy, and compassion; visualize how enemies of Allah were destroyed and their exemplary ends; and remember the Prophets and other friends of Allah. In short, they should read the Qur'an and be aware of what they are reading. Those who are not able to understand its meaning should prepare their souls for its recitation and act respectfully being aware of that they are performing an act of worship. Thus, their heart will be enlightened with respect and reverence, and the magnificence of the Book of Allah will manifest itself in their hearts. If it is possible, believers should read the Qur'an along with its exegesis. If they cannot, then they should attend the sermons and lessons of knowledgeable commentators.

The companions of the Prophet (pbuh) would divide the Qur'an into groups of ten verses; and they would not begin reading another ten before understanding the previous ten verses and applying their rules in their lives. They used to say that "we got knowledge and action together." (Ibn Hanbal, V, 410) For instance, Imam Malik narrated that Abdullah b. Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) studied to learn *surah al-Baqarah* (2) for eight years. (*Muwattā*, Qur'an, 11) In regards to the latter narration al-Bajī makes the following commentary: "This was not because of his weak memory; but he spent so much time in order to learn and apply Qur'an's requirements, rules, and other things related to them." (Kattānī, II, 191)

Jalāl al-Dīn Rumī eloquently states:

"It is related that during the time of the Prophet anyone who knew one sura by heart, or half a sura, was called a great person and pointed out, "He knows a sura by heart," since in that day they devoured the Qur'an. They were reading the Qur'an like they were devouring something. To devour six baṭmans or twelve baṭmans of bread,⁴³ is certainly a great accomplishment. But people who put bread in their mouths without chewing it and spit it out

43. **Batman**, is a measure of weight which weighs between two to eight *okkas*. And an *okka* is equal to 1283 grams.



again can devour thousands of tons in that way. There happened the warning "There are many readers of the Qur'an to whom Qur'an curses." This warning is about those who do not understand the meaning of the Qur'an." (Fihī Mā Fīh, p. 78)

The meanings of the Qur'an are like an endless ocean. It is just like Muhammad Parsa (q.s.) states: "If the real meanings of the verses and letters of the Qur'an were revealed, seven heavens and earth could not stand their weight of manifestation."

A thinker states:

"Even though all kinds of thoughts about the universe and the existence have been discussed and disclosed, endless and matchless meanings of the Qur'an are waiting behind the curtains in layers for the day they will be understood."

Just because understanding the Qur'an with all its depth is beyond human capacity, our job is to not quit reading it and to do our best to learn and apply its meanings as much as we can.

This is why we should read the words of the Lord of the universe and all creation with reverence and respect; because getting the utmost benefit from the Qur'an depends on such respectful reading.

Reverence or awe is the people's respect for their Lord. Those who have knowledge and wisdom and whose hearts are teemed with reverence for Allah prostrate before their Lord and admit His majesty when reading the Qur'an. This is stated in the following verse:

"They fall down on their faces, weeping, and it increased humility in them." (*al-Isrā* 17; 109)

The Prophet (pbuh) called those who continuously and reverently read the Qur'an, live in accordance with its principles, and follow its orders and prohibitions in every aspect of their lives as **"the people of the Qur'an."** On Judgment Day, the Holy Qur'an will make every effort to save these people, whom it causes to spend their nights sleepless and their mornings thirsty (because of fasting). (Ibn Majah, Adab, 52) Another saying of the Prophet (pbuh) expresses this fact as follows:

"Abu Umama said he heard Allah's Messenger (pbuh) say:





“Recite the Qur’an, for on the Day of Resurrection it will come as an intercessor for those who recite it. Recite the two bright ones, al-Baqara and Surah al-‘Imran, for on the Day of Resurrection they will come as two clouds or two shades, or two flocks of birds in ranks, pleading for those who recite them...” (Muslim, Musāfirūn, 253)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) expresses that people of the Qur’an will be helpful not only for themselves but also for their relatives on Judgment Day:

“Narrated by Mu’adh al-Juhanī: The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“If anyone recites the Qur’an and acts according to its contents, on the Day of Judgment his parents will be given to wear a crown whose light is better than the light of the sun if it was placed in the house of this world. So what do you think of him who acts according to his.” (Abū Dawūd, Witṛ, 14)

Those who recite the Qur’an but do not act according to its contents cannot be considered as the people of the Qur’an. What is essential for a believer is to make the effort to have the Qur’an the center of his/her life. In fact the importance of understanding the meaning of the Qur’an and feeling it in the hearts is stated in the following lines of poetry:

Kavl-i Bâri’yi işit Bâri’den
Perdedir geç neğam-ı kârîden.

“O reader of the Qur’an! Open the eyes of your heart and see the Word of Allah and hear it from Him the Almighty the Rightful. Melodies of the reciter are curtains before you; do not get attached to them.”

In order to learn and understand the Qur’an, assembling in and conversing about it is one of the acts of obedience praised by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The blessings awaiting for such people are expressed in the following saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

“...and those persons who assemble in the house among the houses of Allah and recite the Book of Allah and they learn and teach the Qur’an among themselves there would descend upon them the tranquility; and mercy would cover them; and the angels would surround them; and Allah makes a mention of them in the presence of those near Him...” (Muslim, Dhikr, 38)



Allah's Messenger (pbuh) attached the utmost attention to the Qur'an and loved and held dear to his companions who did the same. In fact he appointed Uthmān b. al-Abi al-'Aṣ from the representatives of the Thaḳīf tribe as their leader because, even though he was the youngest, he was the most knowledgeable of the Qur'an among them.

Representatives of the tribe of Thaḳīf had left Uthmān b. al-Abi al-'Aṣ with their animals, because he was the youngest among them. Whenever they went to sleep in the middle of the day, Uthmān (r.a.) was going to the Prophet (pbuh), asking questions about Islam, listening and learning the Holy Qur'an. Thus he memorized some chapters of the Qur'an.

Uthmān (r.a.), who took an oath of allegiance to the Prophet (pbuh) and converted into Islam before the other representatives from his tribe, was going to Abū Bakr or Ubay b. Qa'b (may Allah be pleased with them) and asking them questions, whenever the Prophet (pbuh) was busy. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) liked his efforts and loved him for that. When the representatives of Thaḳīf wanted to go back to their tribe, they said:

"O Messenger of Allah! Appoint one of us as our leader." And the Prophet (pbuh) appointed Uthmān b. al-Abi al-'Aṣ as their leader even though he was the youngest among them. (Ibn Sa'd, V, 508; Ibn Hishām, IV, 185; Ibn Hanbal, IV, 218)

The Prophet's (pbuh) regard for the people of the Qur'an also comprised of the dead ones. Narrated by Jabir bin Abdullah:

"At Uhud the Prophet grouped the martyrs into twos to bury them in one grave, and then he asked,

"Which of them knew more of the Quran?" When one of them was pointed out to him, he put that one first in the grave, giving priority to the one who knew the Qur'an better, and said,

"I will be a witness for them on the Day of Resurrection."

He ordered them to be buried with their blood on their bodies and they were neither washed nor was a funeral prayer offered for them." (Bukhari, Janā'iz, 73, 75)

All these show that carriers of the Qur'an were of great value both in the presence of Allah the Almighty and His Messenger (pbuh).





2. Companions' Preoccupation with the Qur'an

Companions, who were disciplined under the Prophet's supervision, paid the greatest attention to the Qur'an. They were moved by the Qur'an and lived with it. They read the Qur'an so much that they did not even want to spend a single day without reading it and looking at its pages. They began their days with the Qur'an and they even advised those who had eye problems to look at it in order to get cured. According to the reports, Uthmān (r.a.) wore out two Qur'ans from extensive reading. (Kattanī, II, 197)

Umar b. al-Khattāb (r.a.) used to tell Abu Musa al-Asharī (r.a.), who was a very good Qur'an reciter:

"O Abu Musa! Remind us our Lord." And Abu Musa would recite the Qur'an. (Abū Nuaym, I, 258) On an occasion Umar (r.a.) told Abu Musa (r.a.):

"My brother! Enrapture us towards our Lord." Thus, he began to recite the Qur'an. After he recited some parts from the Qur'an, people called Umar to prayer. As if awakened from a spiritual world, Umar wonderingly told them:

"Have not we been already in prayer?" (Ibn Sa'd, IV, 109) This incident also proves us how much enjoyment companions were getting from listening to the Qur'an.

Even though Allah's Messenger (pbuh) ordered his companions to read the Qur'an much, he also warned those who exaggerated. Neither Allah nor His Messenger (pbuh) approved exaggeration in the matters of the religion. 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Al-'As narrated:

"Allah's Apostle (pbuh) said to me,

"O 'Abdullah! Do you think that I have not been informed that you fast during the day and offer prayers all the night?"

'Abdullah replied, "O Allah's Apostle! Of course I know that you have been informed, but I only do so to reach God's pleasure." The Prophet said,

"Don't do that; fast for a few days and then give it up for a few days, offer prayers and also sleep at night, as your body has a right on you, and your wife has a right on you, and your guest has a right on you. And it is sufficient for you to fast three days in a month, as the reward of a good deed is multiplied ten times, so it will be like fasting throughout the year."



I insisted on fasting and so I was given a hard instruction. I said,

“O Allah’s Apostle! I have power.” The Prophet said,

“Fast like the fasting of the Prophet David and do not fast more than that.” I said,

“How was the fasting of the Prophet of Allah, David?” He said,

“Half of the year; (i.e. he used to fast on every alternate day) and recite the whole Qur’an once a month.” Abdullah said,

“I can recite more (in a month),” The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Then recite it once in every twenty days.” Abdullah said,

“I can recite more (in a month),” and the argument went on till the Prophet said,

“Recite the Qur’an once each seven days; do not exceed this limit.” The more the amount was increased, apparently the more it was to my disadvantage. And the Prophet (pbuh) added:

“You do not know that maybe you will have a long life.”

Afterwards when ‘Abdullah became old, he said, “It would have been better for me if I had accepted the Prophet’s advice.” (Bukhārī, Sawm, 55-56-57; Muslim, Kitāb al-Sawm, 181-193)

Even though this companion realized how big his mistake was for not listening to the advice of the Prophet (pbuh), he tried to keep his promise to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Because of his love and submission to the Prophet (pbuh) he spent the last days of his life by forcing himself to complete his acts of worship in order to not break his promise. According to the reports, in the final days of his life he read one-seventh of the Qur’an in the morning in order to rest a little at night. When he needed strength, he would take a break for a few days from fasting; but later he would fast on other days in the amount of the days he could not fast.

In the following report of Abu Huraira (r.a.) the Prophet (pbuh) also expressed the significance of not torturing oneself:

“When any one of you gets up at night for prayer and his tongue falters in the recitation of the Qur’an, and he does not know what he is reciting, he





should go to sleep.” (Muslim, Musāfirūn, 223) “...because those who pray sleepily may curse himself/herself while wishing to repent.” (Abū Dawūd, Tatawwū’, 18)

F. PROPHET’S CONTEMPLATION

There are many exemplary lessons in every single page of this universe.

Dear Lord! How wonderful to see the universe as a school and to take lessons from it is.

Ziyâ Paşa

Contemplation is an act of deep thinking, straining the mind, and perceiving the essence of the matter in question. In other words, it can be considered as the efforts of the heart to reach the truth; and thus it is a characteristic peculiar to human beings. With this special quality, humans are distinguished from and become superior to other creations. In other words, a person spiritually ascends or descends depending on his/her ability to use contemplation wisely. A human who contemplates about the flawless order of the universe, wisdom behind the creation, all kinds of blessings and beauties, transience of the world, and the sequence of the day and the night will spiritually improve, get closer to perfection, and thus he/she will understand the majesty of Allah.

Contemplation is the most effective way to achieve pious submission to Allah the Almighty; to turn towards Him; to get rid of the degrading animal desires; to protect the inner self from the harmful effects of this world and to prevent the self from getting attached to it. Those who contemplate the majesty of Allah will be saved from heedlessness and his/her faith will be strengthened. The true faith can be achieved only by contemplation. This is why contemplation is ordered in several verses of the Qur’an.

Contemplation can be done about the things which can be imagined. This is why contemplation is only possible about the creation of Allah the Almighty, but not about the essence of Allah the Almighty; because Allah cannot be pictured in any kind of image or shape. Human imagination works within the limits of certain dimensions such as quantity, quality, and causality. Whereas, Allah the Almighty is free from such dimensions. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) expresses this reality as follows:



“Contemplate over the creation of Allah, but do not contemplate over the essence of Allah; for you cannot afford to comprehend Him as He is supposed to be comprehended.” (Daylami, II, 56) However, we should not give up contemplating other attributes of Allah, His acts, and His creation, for contemplation is the seed of knowledge. It will not be long before these seeds which are sown into the hearts of human beings give their fruits. Thus, the more we sow the more produce we get.

Contemplating the blessings of Allah the Almighty is one of the most rewarding acts of worship. The Prophet’s first act of worship was contemplation. When contemplating the greatness of Allah and the beauty of His blessings in the Cave of Hira, the Prophet (pbuh) would dive into spiritual realms His heart would be filled with reverence and piety. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“My Lord advised me:

- *To fear from Him in the open or secret under any circumstances;*
- *To decide with justice in both anger and contentment;*
- *To act economically during poverty and richness;*
- *To visit those who do not visit me;*
- *To give to those who do not give me;*
- *To forgive those who oppress me;*
- ***To make my silence contemplation;***
- *To turn my speak into remembrance;*
- *To make my glance exemplary;*
- *And to command what is right.”* (Ibrahim Canan, Hadis Ansiklopedisi, XVI, 252)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh), who followed these orders all his life, paid the utmost attention to turn his silence into a state of contemplation. Hind b. Abu Halah (r.a.) describes the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

“Allah’s Apostle was always in a state of sadness and contemplation. He never found comfort. He would never speak in vain. His silence was longer than his speeches. He would always utter the name of Allah when he began to speak and when he finished his words...” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 422-23)





Yusuf Hamadani (q.s.) expresses that a believer should act thoughtfully as follows: “When contemplation resulting from one’s faith emanates in a person’s heart, Islamic deeds follow right after it. These two, namely faith and practice, should be combined with each other however it is possible.” (*Rutbat al-Hayat*, p. 60)

We are ordered in the Qur’an to contemplate about how Allah the Almighty dignified some nations and degraded some others. (Ibrahim 14; 5) To ponder about the reasons for the destruction of previous nations ensures the human self to be alienated from this world, to be careful about his/her actions and to stay away from committing sins. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur’an:

“Do they not reflect within themselves: Allah did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them but with truth, and (for) an appointed term? And most surely most of the people are deniers of the meeting of their Lord. Have they not travelled in the earth and seen how the end of those before them was? They were stronger than these in prowess, and dug up the earth, and built on it in greater abundance than these have built on it, and there came to them their messengers with clear arguments; so it was not befitting for Allah that He should deal with them unjustly, but they dealt unjustly with their own souls.” (al-Rum 30; 8-9)

The Prophet (pbuh) also commanded to ponder about death; because people will stay away from sins and try to do good deeds when they think about the fact that they will leave this world, will be questioned for their good and bad deeds and will be rewarded or punished in return for their actions. In other words, contemplating death means beautifying the Hereafter and adding meaning to life in this world.

Dawn time, which is the most important and valuable time of the day, is the most fruitful time of the day for contemplation. Believers should think about their mistakes and sins at dawn and then repent for them, ponder about the Divine punishment and death and plan how they need to spend the rest of their lives. This is something that Allah the Almighty wants and likes His servants to do. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) benefited especially from the times of dawn to contemplate. He would stay standing, bending in *ruku’*, prostrating and crying so long that his feet would swell.

Ata’ (may Allah have mercy on his soul) narrates:



“I asked Aisha (r.a.):

“What was the most amazing state of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)?”

She said:

“Which one of his states was not amazing?” and she continued:

“One night he came to bed and lied down. Then he told me:

“If you do not mind, I would like to get up and worship my Lord.” And I said:

“By Allah, I love to be next to you but I love more the things that make you happy.” Upon this he got up, performed ablution, prayed, and cried. He cried so much that his tears flew over his chest. Then he bent down and cried; He prostrated and cried; he raised his head and cried again. This state continued until Bilal recited the call for dawn prayer. When Bilal (r.a.) saw that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was crying, he asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! What is making you cry so much even though all of your sins have been forgiven?” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) replied:

“Should not I be a thanking servant to Allah? By Allah tonight a verse was revealed to me that shame on those who do not contemplate about it.” And then he recited the following verse:

“Behold in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding, men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): our Lord! You did not create (all) this in vain. Glory be to You give us salvation from the penalty of the fire.” (Al-Imrān 3; 190-191) (Ibn Hibbān, II, 386)

Allah the Almighty states that unbelievers pass by the evidences of creation on earth without seeing them; whereas sincere believers, who are defined, described, and loved by Allah the Almighty, remember Him all the time; they contemplate on the creation of the heavens, the earth, and other beings; and they ponder about how all these have been created for their service. They see the Divine art, power, and signs in every detail around them. They realize that all these have not been created in vain and remember their Mighty Cre-



This is expressed by the famous poet Fuzuli as follows:

Olsa istidâd-ı ârif kâbil-i idrâk-i vahy,
Emr-i Hakk irsâline her zerredir bir Cebraîl!

“If the gnostic opens his heart to comprehend the revelation, every particle in the universe will become a Gabriel to him bringing down the orders of Allah.”

Allah the Almighty encourages believers to contemplate through statements, such as **“don’t you think ...”, “there are many signs of ...”** in several verses of the Qur’an. In fact, Allah the Almighty created endless things to think about. Since everything that we see and notice around us is a sign of the existence of Allah, they are very good means to contemplate about. It is stated in a verse that:

“Therewith He causes crops to grow for you, and the olive and the date-palm and grapes and all kinds of fruit. Lo! Herein is indeed a sign for people who reflect.” (al-Nahl 16; 11)

Ritual prayer, which is a believers’ ascension to the presence of Allah the Almighty, is in itself a way of contemplating the majesty of Allah. In this regard, Abu Dhar (r.a.) explains the state of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as follows:

“One night the Prophet (pbuh) repeated the following verse till morning:

إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“If You punish them, lo! They are Your slaves, and if You forgive them (lo! they are Your slaves). Lo! You, only You, are the Mighty, the Wise.” (al-Maidah 5; 118)” (Nasai, Iftitah, 79; Ibn H̄anbal, V, 156)

What we get from these narrations is that all of our actions, speech, and acts of worship should be with contemplation. We especially need to recite the Qur’an slowly and in contemplation of every piece we read. Ali (r.a.) expresses the need for contemplation in reading the Qur’an as follows:

“There is no benefit in recitation without contemplation and in worship without delicate perception. The true scholar is the one who does not cut people’s hopes from Allah’s mercy, who does not make people unsure about being saved from Allah’s punishment, and who makes people be inclined to nothing but the Qur’an.” (Ibrâhîm Canan, XV, 24)

Allah the Almighty invites not only the believers but also the unbelievers to contemplate in the following verse:

“Say: “I do admonish you on one point: that you do stand up before Allah- (it may be) in pairs, or (it may be) singly- and reflect (within yourselves) ...” (Saba’ 34; 46)

In this verse, the Prophet (pbuh) tells his polytheist opponents to worship Allah in congregation or singly and to acknowledge that he is a true Prophet of Allah. He reminds them that just by following this single advice, they can comprehend the reality and know how to act. In other words, everything centers on a good servitude and deep contemplation.⁴⁴

Luqman (pbuh) loved to sit in solitary and contemplate. He did this very often. When he was asked:

“Why are you sitting? Would not it be better if you sit with people and talk with them?” He said:

“Staying alone for an extended amount of time is more appropriate for contemplation. And an extended time of contemplation will take human beings to the path to Paradise.”⁴⁵

Every minute and particle of the universe is an endless sea filled with deep meanings, which can take a person to Allah the Almighty. They are in-

44. This Divine advice also implies another reality. Social intellect imprints the seal of commonness upon individual’s intellects and people think differently when they are in a community than when they are alone. This Qur’anic principle commands to the individuals of a community to stay in solitary and away from the effects and pressure of the society from time to time and contemplate about the reality. Even though this verse acknowledges the dominance of social intellect and its effects upon individual intellect, it also states that principles of social intellect do not always lead a person to the truth. Therefore, individuals should express their own free opinion, sincerely criticize these general principles, and develop an independent thinking. Thus, both individuals and the society can be prevented from going astray and goodness may prevail. (Muhammad Diraz, p. 203)

45. The place where Luqman (pbuh) secluded himself in and contemplated is located in a mosque in Tarsus, Turkey, which attracts many visitors.



exhaustible treasures for the people of contemplation. How elegantly the poet expresses this:

“Universe is a great book of Allah from one end to the other. Whichever letter of this great book you read, you will see that it always means Allah. Upon whichever particle of the universe you contemplate, it will take you to Allah.”

Those who can reach the Creator of the universe by contemplating about the creation will not only live peacefully in this world but also enjoy Paradise and the face of Allah in the Hereafter.

G. HIS REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH AND MEDITATION

“Is not the time ripe for the hearts of those who believe to submit to Allah’s reminder and to the truth which is revealed”

(al-Ḥadīd 57; 16)

In many places of the Qur’an, Allah the Most Glorious reminds us to remember Him in order to attain eternal salvation:

“O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance, and glorify Him morning and evening.” (al-Ahzāb 33; 41-42) Allah wants us to remember Him while we are sitting, lying, in short, all the time.

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

“Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: ...” (Al-i Imran 3; 191)

Allah the Almighty cherishes remembrance of Him so much that He asks from us that our property, our children, our trade and transactions should not hold us from remembrance:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

“O you who believe! Let not your wealth nor do your children distract you from remembrance of Allah. Those who do so, they are the losers.” (al-Munafiqūn 63; 9)

On the one hand Allah the Almighty warns those who neglect remembrance of Him, on the other hand He praises those who continue remembering Him as follows:

“Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of poor-rate; they fear a day in which the hearts and eyeballs will be overturned.” (al-Nūr 24; 37)

People remember Allah in three ways: □ With their tongue, or by saying His beautiful names, by thanking for everything He bestowed, by reading the Qur'an and praying,

With their hearts, or by thinking about the signs which show His existence and getting rid of the doubts, by trying to understand the secrets of the universe, and by accepting the wisdom behind the commands and prohibitions of Allah and by obeying it,

And with their body, or by using every limb in their body properly and in accordance with the orders of Allah the Almighty.

Allah the Almighty shows His mercy to His thankful and remembering servant; He will increase His blessings upon this servant, accepts his/her prayers, and saves him/her from his/her problems.

This is why the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) paid so much attention to remembrance of Allah. His heart was busy with the remembrance of Allah day and night, and his tongue was busy with thanking Him. When he wanted to eat or drink something, he would first say Allah's name; when he finished, he would thank Him; when he went to bed or woke up, he would remember Him. When he sit and stood up, he would say praises for Allah; when he put on a new dress, he would thank Allah for it. When we examine his prayers, praises, and remembrances of Allah for different occasions and times, we see that our Prophet (pbuh) loved Allah and was always in pious reverence before the Glory and Majesty of Allah. From this perspective, it is possible to say that the truth of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) is hidden in his supplications. Aisha (r.a.) says that:





“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) would remember Allah at all moments.”

(Muslim, Hayḍ, 117)

Remembrance of Allah was so significant for the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) that all the ornaments of the world meant nothing for him. In fact the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“World and everything in it are worthless. Only remembrance of Allah, the scholar who teaches things that make people closer to Allah, and the student who would like to learn (such knowledge) are the exception.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 14)

This is why Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) preferred to be with the people of remembrance over everything else. He stated this as follows:

“That I sit in the company of the people who remember Allah the Exalted from morning prayer till the sun rises is dearer to me than that I emancipate four slaves from the children of Ishmael. And again that I sit with the people who remember Allah from afternoon prayer till the sun sets is dearer to me than that I emancipate four slaves.” (Abū Dawūd, ‘Ilm, 13)

In order to gain more spiritual rewards in this short worldly life, we should turn towards the deeds which will bring more rewards in less time. This is why the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) regarded prayers and remembrances of Allah, which are short in appearance but great in meaning, very important.

Juwairiya (r.a.) reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) came out from her apartment in the morning as she was busy in observing her dawn prayer in her place of worship. He came back in the forenoon and she was still sitting there. He said to her:

“Have you been in the same seat and saying remembrances of Allah since I left you?” She said:

“Yes, I have.” Thereupon Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said:

“I recited four words three times after I left you and if these are to be weighed against what you have recited since morning these would outweigh them and these words are:



سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ عَدَدَ خَلْقِهِ وَرِضَا نَفْسِهِ
وَزَنَةَ عَرْشِهِ وَمِدَادَ كَلِمَاتِهِ

“Hallowed be Allah and all praises are due to Him in as much as the number of His creation and in as much as the amount which pleases Him and in as much as the weight of His Throne and in as much as endless number of His words.” (Muslim, Dhikr 79)

Allah the Almighty, who loves His servants, taught them literally light but meaningfully heavy remembrances in order to take them to the highest stations of Paradise, because Allah’s blessings to His servants are endless. Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas (r.a.) narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Is one amongst you powerless to get one thousand virtues every day?” Amongst those who had been sitting there, one asked:

“How one amongst us can get one thousand virtues every day?” The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“For those who say: ‘subhanallah - Hallowed be Allah’ one hundred times one thousand virtues are recorded or one thousand vices are forgiven.” (Muslim, Dhikr 37)

In order to attain the spiritual perfection and achieve good manners, believers should always contemplate about Allah and be aware of that He sees them everywhere and all the time. Those who maintain this consciousness continuously would not only stay away from the sins but also try to do good and righteous deeds. Allah the Almighty loves them and makes all His creation to love them in the heavens and the earth. In fact Abu Huraira reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying that:

“Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, thus stated: I am near to the thought of My servant as he thinks about Me, and I am with him as he remembers Me. And if he remembers Me in his heart, I also remember him in My Heart, and if he remembers Me in assembly I remember him in assembly, better than his remembrance, and if he draws near Me by the span of a palm, I draw near him by the cubit, and if he draws near Me by the cubit I draw near him by the space covered by two hands. And if he walks towards Me, I rush towards him.” (Bukhari, Tawhid, 15; Muslim, Dhikr, 2)





If a servant remembers Allah and contemplates about His blessings, Allah the Almighty would take the obstacles off his/her path and grant him/her spiritual manifestations. If the servant remembers Allah in an assembly and tries to convey the message of Islam in this way, Allah the Almighty make the residents of heavens love and pray for that servant. Thus the blessings will pour down upon the servant. And then the residents of earth will love him/her. This is such a great blessing that human beings cannot properly appreciate it.

In this respect Bishr-i Khafi, a friend of Allah, is a good example. He was seen in a dream after his death. When he was asked “what kind of judgment Allah has given about you,” he replied:

“Allah has forgiven me and made half of Paradise permitted for me. Then He told me:

“O Bishr! If you were to prostrate on burning coil, you would not have properly showed your gratitude for the love which I placed in my servants’ hearts towards you.” (Kushayri, p. 406)

The Prophet (pbuh) paid so much attention to the remembrance of Allah that he was attaching all of the merits of the worship to remembrance of Allah. The following narration is an exemplary on in this respect. A companion came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

“Which fighter in the path of Allah is rewarded more?” The Prophet (pbuh) replied:

“The one who remembers Allah the most” The man asked again:

“Which one’s fast is more rewarding?”

“The one which was performed by someone who remembers Allah the most” Then the man repeated similar questions about performers of prayers, payers of alms, givers of charity and pilgrims. The Prophet (pbuh) replied all of these questions as:

“The one which was performed by someone who remembers Allah the most” Upon this Abu Bakr (r.a.) told Umar (r.a.):

“O Abu Hafs! Those who remember Allah have taken all rewards.” When the Prophet (pbuh) heard this, he turned to them and said:

“Yes, this is true.” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 438; Haythami, X, 74)



Since remembrance of Allah polishes and cleanses the heart, deeds of those who have such cleansed hearts are different than those who do not have them. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) expresses the value of those with polished hearts as follows:

“Such is the custom of kings: you will have heard of this, if you remember. The heroes and brave soldiers stand on their left hand, because the heart (the seat of courage) is fixed on the left side (of the body). On the right hand are the chancellor and the secretaries, because the science of writing and book-keeping belongs (in practice) to this hand. They give the Sūfīs the place in front of their countenance, for they (the Sūfīs) are a mirror for the soul, and better than a mirror; (Since) they have polished their breasts (hearts) in commemoration (of Allah) and meditation, that the heart’s mirror may receive the virgin (original) image. Whoever is born beautiful from the loins of Creation, a mirror must be placed before him. The beautiful face is in love with the mirror: it (such a face) is a polisher of the soul and (a kindler) of the fear of Allah in (men’s) hearts.” (Mathnawī, 1, verses: 3150-56)

The Prophet (pbuh) wanted his companions to engraft the remembrance of Allah in their hearts and remember Allah everywhere and all the time. Muadh (r.a.) narrates that:

“One day I came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked him to give me an advice. He said:

“Fear from Allah as much as you can do. Remember Allah every rock or every tree next to which you sit. And repent secretly for every sin you committed secretly; and repent openly for every sin you committed openly.” (Haythami, X, 74)

The difference between those who remember their Lord and those who are defeated by their heedlessness and forgot Allah is like the difference between dead and alive. (Bukhari, Daawat, 66) The difference between a house in which Allah is remembered and a house in which Allah’s name is not mentioned and no act of worship is performed is also like the difference between living and dead. (Muslim, Musafirun, 211)

The Prophet (pbuh) states that those who forget that Allah sees them will be greatly disappointed. Not just those who forget completely remembrance of Allah but also those believers who often remember Allah but be heedless



sometimes will be in great regret and pain in the Hereafter. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) says about such believers, who enter Paradise:

لَمْ يَتَحَسَّرْ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا عَلَى سَاعَةٍ مَرَّتْ
بِهِمْ لَمْ يَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ تَعَالَى فِيهَا

"People of Paradise will regret and long for nothing but for the moments they spent without remembrance of Allah in this world." (Haythami, X, 73-74)

This is why the Prophet (pbuh) encouraged his followers to prepare for the Hereafter and thus warned them not to regret later. Ubayy b. Ka'b (r.a.) narrates that the Prophet (pbuh) would wake up after two thirds of the night passed and say:

"O people! Remember Allah! Remember Allah! The first Sur (trumpet) of the Judgment Day will be blown! Then the second one will come. Death will come with all its harshness. Death will come with all its harshness..." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 23)

Of course contemplating and remembering Allah all the time is not something which can be achieved automatically. In order to attain this good quality one should endeavor and ask help from Allah the Almighty. Muadh b. Jabal (r.a.) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"O Muadh, verily I love you (for the sake of Allah)." I replied:

"O Messenger of Allah, I swear by Allah that I love you, too." The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) then said:

"I advise you to say these words after every prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَى ذِكْرِكَ وَشُكْرِكَ وَحُسْنِ عِبَادَتِكَ

"O Allah, help me to remember you and to thank you and to better perform my worship to You." (Nasa'i, Sahw, 60; Abū Dawūd, Witr, 26)

Those who would like to attain the attribute of being in continuous state of remembrance and meditation should both beseech Allah to be blessed by



it and strive to attain it. This quality can be achieved more safely and easily through the practices guided by Sufi masters.

Remembrance and meditation ensure purification and development of the self, clearance of the sins, and increase in goodness; because inclining towards Allah the Almighty and holding tight to His mercy wipes the sins off and strengthen the spirituality. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

"... Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest!" (al-Ra'd 13; 28)

Hajah Yusuf Hamadani (q.s.) makes the following statement, which is also a fine commentary for the above-mentioned verse:

"Those who find consolation in religion and be happy with the remembrance of Allah will have no hostility with those who reside in seven heavens and the earth. They will have a tranquil place in this world of deficiencies, uselessness, deception, and delusions; such that their bird of intention will fly in the heavens of divinity." (*Rutbat al-Hayat*, p. 58-59)

Those who remember Allah will also be protected from the harms of Devil, for Divine mercy and the prayers of angels will enfold them. Yahya (John the Baptist) (pbuh) says that:

"...and Allah the Almighty also orders you to remember Him much. The man who remembers Allah is similar to a man who is followed by an enemy. Just like this man can protect himself from the enemy by entering into a castle, a servant can protect himself/herself against the Devil only by remembrance of Allah..." (Tirmidhi, Adab, 78)

The real benefit of remembrance will be seen in the Hereafter, because Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stated in one of his saying that *"son of Adam have not performed any other deed which protects him from punishment of Allah more than the remembrance of Allah."* (*Muwatta*, Qur'an, 24) In another prophetic tradition, it is expressed that Allah the Almighty will address on the Day of Judgment saying:

"Take the person who remembered Me and feared from Me for a moment in his life out of the Hell-fire." (Tirmidhi, Jahannam, 9)

Most importantly people achieve Divine love and knowledge through remembrance and meditation. As a result of this Allah the Almighty loves and



befriends them. In fact Allah the Almighty expresses in the following sacred tradition:

“...Among My servants those who remember Me are My friends and the ones that I love most among My creation are those who remember Me. In return for their remembrance, I, too, remember them.” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 430)

However prasing the names of Allah should be performed by a conscious heart. It is obvious that a senseless praising, which is done by a heedless heart, will provide little benefit. Rumi (q.s.) explains this as follows:

“Our King (Allah) has given permission, (saying), “Commemorate Allah”: He saw us in the fire and gave us light. He has said, “Although I far transcend your commemoration (of Me), (and although) the pictorial ideas (of human speech) are not suitable to Me, Yet he that is intoxicated with (pictorial) imagination and fancy will never apprehend My essence without (the help of) similitude.” Bodily commemoration is an imperfect fancy: the Kingly attributes are remote from those (forms of speech).” (Mathnawī, II, verses: 1715-1718)

A heart reaches peacefulness through continuous remembrance of Allah and then attains the state of *muraqabah* (meditation). *Muraqabah* means to have the awareness of that “Allah the Almighty watches over and knows both the outer appearance and the inward qualities of the servants.” In order to attain such awareness one needs to practice through remembrance and contemplation. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said that:

إِحْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدَهُ تُجَاهَكَ

“Obey (observe) Allah so that you may find Him before you.” (Ibn Hanbal, I, 293)

Yusuf Hamadani (q.s.) depicts how a heart can be accustomed for remembrance and meditation through the following nice example: “Heart and remembrance of Allah is like a tree and water; while heart and meditation is like a tree and its fruit. Both expecting the tree to grow and get green without watering it and expecting it to give fruits without waiting for it to bloom are mistakes. It would never give fruits. It should be watered; weeds and other harmful plants around it should be cleaned; and then the heat of the sun must be waited. When all these come together, then the tree becomes fresh and live-

ly and adorns with green leaves. After the tree adorns with such qualities, we can expect fruits from it. And this is the time to expect fruits from it.” (*Rutbat al-Hayat*, p. 71)

Muraqabah, which is used as a method of Sufi training, has been developed from the same objective. A believer contemplates over the attributes of Allah the Almighty, such as All-Knowing, Omnipotence, Mercy, and All-Encompassing. For instance he/she reads a verse from the Qur’an like the following ones:

“Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the eternally Besought of all! (All creation needs Him, but He needs nothing) He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none comparable unto Him.” (al-Ikhlās 112; 1-4)

“...And He is with you wheresoever you may be...” (al-Ḥadīd 57; 4)

“...and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein.” (Qāf 50; 16)

“...a people whom He will love as they will love Him ...” (al-Maidah 5; 54)

Then he/she thinks about the meanings of these verses without making any comparisons of Allah with the creation. He/she just tries to think Allah the Almighty with these attributes. When his/her imagination gets weakened, he reads the verse and thinks about it again. As long as he/she continues this, his/her feeling of *ihsan* increases and he/she gets closer to knowing Allah.

In order to get the best benefit from *muraqabah*, contemplation, and remembrance one needs to observe its requirements closely, and to choose the most peaceful time when his/her heart will not be busy with states like hunger, sleepiness, or anger.

H. HIS SUPPLICATIONS TO ALLAH THE ALMIGHTY

“(O mankind!) Call upon your Lord humbly and in secret.”

(al-A’rāf 7; 55)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) spent all his time being conscious of the togetherness with Allah the Almighty. Our Prophet (pbuh) not only was the person who knew Allah best in this world but also was the one who feared from Him most and comprehended His Majesty. This is why all his acts of worship and his prayers were in the mode of imploring. When we examine his





supplications, we can see that he prayed and shed tears more for his ummah than for himself.

Abdullah b. Amr b. al-'As reported:

“One day the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) recited the following words of Allah the Almighty that Abraham (pbuh) uttered:

“O my Lord they have indeed led astray many among mankind; he then who follows my (ways) is of me, and he that disobeys me, but You are indeed Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Ibrahīm 14; 36) and then he recited the supplication of Jesus (pbuh):

“If You punish them, lo! They are Your slaves, and if You forgive them (lo! they are Your slaves). Lo! You, only You, are the Mighty, the Wise.” (al-Maidah 5; 118)

After that he raised his hands and said:

“O Lord, Protect my Ummah, and show Your mercy upon my Ummah,” and wept; so Allah the High and the Exalted said:

“O Gabriel, go to Muhammad (though your Lord knows it fully well) and ask him: What makes him weep?”

So Gabriel (pbuh) came to him and asked him, and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) informed him that he was crying because of his concerns for his ummah. Upon this Allah the Almighty said:

“O Gabriel, go to Muhammad and say: Verily We will please you with regard to your Ummah and would not displease you.” (Muslim, Imān, 346)

Our Prophet (pbuh), who suffered a great deal and did not quail back from any hardships in order to convey the message of Islam to people and lead them to the straight path, was worried about people being astray. This is why he always prayed for unbelievers to accept Islam, for believers to stay on the straight path, and for the sinners to be forgiven. He did not even mind the worst oppression and kept praying for his enemies to be saved. According to Abu Dhar's (r.a.) report, one night Allah's Messenger (pbuh) performed prayer and recited the 118th verse of the surah al-Maidah (5) till morning. He was reciting this verse when he bowed down, when he prostrated ... (Ibn Hanbal, V, 149)



Because Meccan polytheist had insisted not to accept the message of Islam, the Prophet (pbuh) went to Taif hoping that they would accept it. There, the polytheists did not welcome the Messenger of Allah, on the contrary they made fun of him and had their slaves throw stones at him. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) got wounded and his feet were bleeding. Sometimes he collapsed because of his pain, and they stood him up; and as soon as he walked, they began to stone, mock, and laugh at him again. After all these oppressions, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) rested for a while and then performed a two-rak'ah-prayer and raised his hands and invoked Allah the Almighty as follows:

"O Allah! I present to You my complaints, my weakness, paucity of my precautions, and being insulted by these people ...

The most Compassionate of the compassionate! You are the Lord of the weak and You are my Lord! To whom are You leaving me? To those who stay away from You and frown at me when they see me! Or are You leaving me to the enemy that You give my task to his hand? ... " (Haythami, VI, 35; Ibn Hisham, II, 29-30)

Invoking to Allah the Almighty so sincerely is something that can be done by someone who knows Him and esteems His Might best. Even though he had suffered so much for the sake of Allah, he was still afraid of making mistakes against Him and he was taking refuge to Him from His punishment. Moreover, he refused the offer of the Angel of the Mountains "to put the two mountains together and destroy the people of Taif." Instead, he invoked to his Lord for them to find the straight path.

The below incident which was witnessed by Aisha (r.a.) not only shows our Prophet's reverence to Allah the Almighty but also teaches us how to invoke to Him.

Aisha (r.a.) reported: One night I missed Allah's Messenger (pbuh) from the bed, and when I sought him my hand touched the soles of his feet while he was in the state of prostration; his feet were raised and he was saying:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعُوذُ بِرِضَاكَ مِنْ سَخِطِكَ وَبِمُعَافَاتِكَ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِكَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْكَ. لَا أَحْصِي ثَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَثْنَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ





“O Allah, I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your anger, and in Your forgiveness from Your punishment, and I seek refuge in You from You (Your anger). I cannot reckon Your praise. You are as You have praised Yourself.”
(Muslim, Salāt, 222)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) continued to pray to his Lord all the time, in comfort and in hardship, or in scarcity and abundance. It has been narrated on the authority of Umar b. al-Khattab who said:

“When it was the day on which the Battle of Badr was fought, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) cast a glance at the infidels, and they were one thousand while his own companions were three hundred and nineteen. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) turned (his face) towards the Qiblah, then he stretched his hands and began his supplication to his Lord:

“O Allah, accomplish for me what You have promised to me. O Allah, bring about what You have promised to me. O Allah, if this small band of Muslims is destroyed. You will not be worshipped on this earth.” He continued his supplication to his Lord, stretching his hands, facing the Qiblah, until his mantle slipped down from his shoulders. So Abu Bakr came to him, picked up his mantle and put it on his shoulders. Then he embraced him from behind and said:

“Prophet of Allah, this prayer of yours to your Lord will suffice you, and He will fulfill for you what He has promised you.” So Allah, the Glorious and Exalted, revealed the Qur’anic verse:

“When you appealed to your Lord for help, He responded to your call saying: I will help you with one thousand angels coming in succession.”
(al-Anfal 8; 9) Allah the Almighty helped the believers with angels on that day.”
(Muslim, Jihād, 58; Bukharī, Maghāzī, 4)

Our Prophet (pbuh), who did not accept any support or refuge from anyone except Allah and always presented his needs to Him, invoked to Allah the Almighty for the needs of his ummah in Battle of Badr as follows:

“O Allah, they are on foot, provide mount for them; O Allah, they are naked, clothe them; O Allah, they are hungry, provide food for them.”



Allah then bestowed victory on them. They returned when they were clothed. There was no man of them but he returned with one or two camels; they were clothed and ate to their fill. (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 145)

Whenever the companions were in need, they would come to the Prophet (pbuh) and ask him to pray for them. Even polytheists came and asked for help from him during a famine. (Bukhari, Tafsir, 44; 2-3) The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) prayed for rain during a famine as follows:

“O Allah, You are Allah, there is no deity but You, You are the Rich, while we are the poor. Send down the rain upon us and make what You sent down a strength and satisfaction for us for a time.” (Abu Dawud, Istisqa, 2)

From time to time the Prophet (pbuh) prayed together with his companions in order to teach them how to pray; because Allah the Almighty states in the Qur'an that He does not want a servant who does not pray:

قُلْ مَا يَعْبُؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ

“Say (O Muhammad, unto the disbelievers): My Lord would not concern Himself with you but for your prayer. But now you have denied (the Truth), therefore there will be judgment.” (al-Furqān 25; 77)

When polytheists were leaving after they had lost the battle at Uhud, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told his companions:

“Get in line, I will praise and pray to my Lord.” Companions got in line behind the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and then he prayed saying:

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ كُلُّهُ. اَللّٰهُمَّ لَا قَابِضَ لِمَا بَسَطْتَ وَلَا بَاسِطَ لِمَا قَبَضْتَ وَلَا هَادِيَ لِمَنْ اَضَلَلْتَ وَلَا مُضِلَّ لِمَنْ هَدَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيَ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ وَلَا مَانِعَ لِمَا اَعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُقَرِّبَ لِمَا بَاعَدْتَ وَلَا مُبَاعِدَ لِمَا قَرَّبْتَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ ابْسُطْ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ بَرَكَاتِكَ وَرَحْمَتِكَ وَفَضْلِكَ وَرِزْقِكَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْأَلُكَ النَّعِيْمَ الْمُقِيْمَ الَّذِي لَا يَحْوُلُ وَلَا يَزُولُ. اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ



أَسْأَلُكَ النَّعِيمَ يَوْمَ الْعَيْلَةِ وَالْأَمْنِ يَوْمَ الْخَوْفِ. اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ عَائِدُ بِكَ
مِنْ شَرِّ مَا اَعْطَيْتَنَا وَشَرِّ مَا مَنَعْتَنَا. اَللّٰهُمَّ حَبِّبْ اِلَيْنَا الْاِيْمَانَ وَزَيِّنْهُ فِي
قُلُوْبِنَا وَكَرِّهْ اِلَيْنَا الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوْقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الرَّاشِدِيْنَ.
اَللّٰهُمَّ تَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِيْنَ وَاَخِيْنَا مُسْلِمِيْنَ وَاَلْحِقْنَا بِالصّٰلِحِيْنَ غَيْرِ خَزَايَا
وَلَا مَفْتُوْنِيْنَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ قَاتِلِ الْكُفْرَةَ الَّذِيْنَ يُكَذِّبُوْنَ رُسُلَكَ وَيَصُدُّوْنَ عَنِ
سَبِيْلِكَ وَاجْعَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزَكَ وَعَذَابَكَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ قَاتِلِ الْكُفْرَةَ الَّذِيْنَ
اُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ، اِلَهَ الْحَقِّ!

“O Allah! All praises belong to You. There is no one who can stretch what you folded; and there is no one who can fold what you stretched. There is no one who can guide to the right path those whom You misguided; and there is no one who can misguide those whom You guided to the straight path. No one can give what You do not give; and no one can prevent what You give. No one can make close what You ward off; and no one ward off what You make bring closer.

O Allah! Spread Your mercy and blessings upon us. O Allah! I want from You endless blessings which will never change and vanish. O Allah! I ask from You blessings on the day of need and safety on the day of fear. O Allah! I take refuge in You from both what You have given and what You have not.

O Allah! Let us love faith and make our hearts adorned with it. Make us hate from disbelief, immorality, and disobedience. Make us among those who are on the straight path and those who know what is beneficial for religion and for this world.

O Allah! Let us live as believers and take our lives as believers. Let us join among the righteous without losing our dignity.

O Allah! Destroy the unbelievers who deny Your messenger and hold people from Your path. Send Your punishment and torment upon them. O Allah! Destroy those unbelievers whom You sent the book. O the True and the Right God!” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 424; Hākim, I, 686-687; III, 26)



Someone's invocation to Allah means his/her acceptance of Allah's Majesty and it is a manifestation of his/her servitude and weakness before Him. This is why servants' prayer and supplications attract Allah's contentment. Only the arrogant, conceited, and ignorant ones turn away from praying. Sincerity and earnestness in invocations are indicators of the servant's spiritual station and level of perception.

Up to this section we tried to examine the Prophet's life of worship a little; because a perfect presentation of his life of worship is impossible. However, we need to try to learn his acts of worship in order to take them as examples for us. Of course he is the most perfect exemplar sent to all of humanity and he was sent to teach us how to worship Allah the Almighty.

Acts of worship commanded by Allah are the manifestation of our faithfulness to our promise to Him. These acts of worship guide the believers to the straight path and they will be witnesses for their performers on the Day of Judgment. Rumi (q.s.) nicely explains the meaning of our worship in the following lines:

"This ritual prayer and fasting and pilgrimage and striving in the path of Allah are the attestation of the inward belief. The giving of alms, gifts to friends and the abandonment of envy are the attestation of one's secret thoughts. Inviting guests, hospitality, feeding and treating them nicely mean, saying with our actions, that "we, O noble guests, are true believers as you are. We, too, keep our promise to Allah, and we too show our inner purity as you do."

Gifts and presents and offerings bear witness (say implicitly), "I am pleased with you." If anyone exerts himself in helping others by giving money or in some other way, he/she means to say, "I have the essence of abstinence or generosity in me". This alms-giving and fasting are witnesses in regard to both these qualities.

Fasting implicitly says, "O Allah! This person has abstained from what is lawful and did not drink when he was thirsty by following Your command: how can this person get close to what is unlawful"

And his alms-giving says (implicitly), "He separated himself from his most beloved property and presented it to the needy: how, then, can he steal when he gets a chance?"





If he performs all these acts and goodness out of vanity, or to deceit people, then these witnesses will not be accepted in the court of Divine justice.”
(Mathnawī, V, verses: 183-191)

The object of the acts of worship should not be to kill the inner self but to keep it on the straight path; because it is impossible to kill the inner self other than by natural death. By means of these acts of worship our inner selves will get disciplined and adorned with good manners.

Just as in all aspects of his life, our Prophet’s (pbuh) measure in the acts of worship was not quantity but perseverance and regularity. He (pbuh) stated this reality as follows:

“...the most beloved deed to Allah is the most regular and constant one even though it is little.” (Bukharī, Riqāq, 18)

The Prophet’s (pbuh) worship was continuous and encompassed harmoniously all parts of his life. This is why he was always with his Lord and busy with His remembrance. Those who examine the Prophet’s (pbuh) acts of obedience would think that he did nothing in his life but just worshipped; while those who look at his daily activities might think that he had no time to worship. Whereas the most salient part of his life is that he managed to establish a unique balance between the life of servitude to Allah and daily activities.

The endless Pride of the universe (pbuh) perfectly performed his acts of worship, just as he regularly executed his daily responsibilities. He took care of his family and the needy; he became the perfect guide for a great ummah, established a strong state, sent envoys to neighboring rulers and invited them to Islam, welcomed their emissaries, controlled and led armies, fought when he faced obstacles before conveying the message of Allah, made preparations to help others, and took precautions not to be defeated. He sent tax-collectors, gathered alms, and distributed them saying: *“If I do not act justly, then who would?”* He conveyed every message which he had received. He explained the verses, if they needed to be interpreted. He established his own tradition and deduced rules from the fundamental source, the Qur’an. When he did not receive a revelation from Allah the Almighty, he solved the problems by resorting to what he had already received.

Even though, in all these aspects, he thoroughly executed his heavy daily responsibilities, he also performed his acts of worship better than those who secluded themselves in a mountain, and became a light to the people around him.



IV. PROPHET'S ASCETIC LIFE STYLE

Zuhd (asceticism) can be expressed as the disfavoring the temporal pleasures and blessings of this world in view of the Hereafter and the contentment of Allah the Almighty. It occupies an important place in improving our spiritual life. Just like in every other aspect of our lives, our Prophet (pbuh) presented the most perfect example of how an ascetic life should be lived.

Zuhd means “to stay away, to leave, and to not be inclined to worldly things.” In addition, it means to not demand, leave or turn away from something as a result of belittling and seeing it as worthless. Therefore, asceticism means reducing the mortal pleasures, getting rid of worldly ambitions, seeing this world as a temporal place and taking its desires out of the heart, and abstaining from the comfort of this world for the comfort of the Hereafter. The one who follows an ascetic life is called *zahid*.

In order for someone to be called a *zahid*, it means that he/she has worldly means but does not esteem to them. In fact, when describing himself, Malik b. Dinar says that: “People say that Malik b. Dinar is an ascetic (a *zahid*), but Umar b. Abdulaziz is the true ascetic; because he never loved this world even though the world obeyed him and came to his feet.” (Ibn Hanbal, V, 249)

On the other hand, staying away from things that the human self does not normally desire is not considered asceticism. For instance, leaving gold or silver is considered as *zuhd* while not demanding trivial and worthless things is not.

There are three stages of asceticism (*zuhd*) that depend upon the spiritual levels of the believers. First is abstaining from the prohibitions, which is the stage of the common people's asceticism. The second stage is abstaining from the excessive amounts of permitted things, which is the stage of the distinguished believers' asceticism. And the last stage is abstaining from all kinds of preoccupation which prevents contemplating Allah. This is the Gnostics' asceticism. And this is the most difficult type of *zuhd*; because this type of *zuhd* requires abstinence not only from the blessings of this world but also



from thinking of Paradise and its blessings. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) describes this as follows:

“Worldly riches are a trap for the weak birds; the kingdom of the next world is a trap for the noble birds, to the end that by means of this kingdom, which is a deep trap, the great birds may be ensnared. “O possessors of the worldly wealth! Even though you are the owners of your wealth, indeed you are the slaves of your kingdom; the owner of the kingdom is he that escaped from destruction.” Preposterously, O prisoner of this world, you have named yourself prince of this world. O you slave of this world, you whose spirit is imprisoned, how long will you call yourself as the king of the world?” (Mathnawi, IV, verses: 647-52)

Worldly possessions are traps for foolish people who do not think of the end and who cannot foresee the future; while afterlife is a trap for honorable people who perform their religious duties. Therefore both this world and the Hereafter are things about which people must approach cautiously. Those who lose their hearts to this world fall into its trap; while those who perform their worship to reach Paradise and its pleasures fall into the Hereafter’s trap. However, neither love for this world nor love for the Hereafter will save human beings, but only the love for Allah the Almighty will give us eternal felicity.

Rabiat al-Adawiyyah’s following invocation is a wonderful expression of this reality:

“O Allah! If I worship You out of my desire for Paradise, do not let me enter it. If I worship You out of my fear from Hell, do not let me get out of it. However I worship You, just because You are You. I love You, just because there is nothing else worthy of my love.”

It is obvious that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is the only person whom true ascetics should take as an example. This is why his life of asceticism should be learned in depth.

A. HIS APPROACH TO THE LIFE IN THIS WORLD AND THE HEREAFTER

Lamb is what makes the wolf's mouth water most. Lamb, on the other hand, fears most from the wolf. However the strangest thing is that lamb falls in love with the wolf. A person's love for this world is similar to this.

Abstaining from this world and everything else besides Allah (*masiwa*) and turning towards Him is called *tabattul* or wholeheartedness in the Qur'an. (al-Muzzammil 73; 8) When someone has to make a choice between this world and the Hereafter, he/she are commanded to choose the Hereafter; and those who do the opposite are strongly warned. (Ibrahim 14; 3; al-Naziat 79; 37-39) Because according to the description in the Qur'an, life in this world is nothing but deception. (Al-i Imran 3; 185) Little is the comfort of this life, as compared with the Hereafter. (al-Tawba 9; 38) The life of this world is also just simple play and amusement. (al-An'am 6; 32)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh), our most excellent exemplar, was the most ascetic human being. Even though he gained countless amounts of wealth as a result of conquests, he mostly did not have a warm cooked meal at his home for several consecutive days. Whereas, Allah the Almighty Himself gave him the authority to dispose of one fifth of war booty as he wished (al-Anfal 8; 41). For instance, it is reported that the amount of the booty from the Battle of Hunain was forty thousand sheep, twenty four thousand camels, six hundred slaves, and four hundred *uqiyyahs* of silver. (Ibn Sa'd, II, 152) Moreover, the Prophet (pbuh) could have lived a very comfortable life if he had chosen to especially since he received gifts sent by the rulers of neighboring countries in addition to the war booties. However, such a life did not fit into his understanding of charity and ascetic lifestyle; for he stated in one of his sayings that he did not value this world:

"What I desire is that Uhud be gold with me and three nights should pass and there is left with me any dinar but one coin which I would keep to pay my debt." (Bukhari, Tamanna, 2) By conforming to the statements of the Qur'an, the Prophet (pbuh) even warned his wives, who had been inclined to worldly possessions, and asked them to choose either the adornments of this world or Allah and His Messenger. He then stayed away from them for a month to give



them time to think. Below are the verses revealed upon this incident, which is also called “’ila”:

“O Prophet! Say to your wives: If you desire this world’s life and its adornment, then come, I will give you a provision and allow you to depart a goodly departing, but if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, then lo! Allah has prepared for the good among you an immense reward.” (al-Ahzab 33; 28-29) In this respect, Aisha (r.a.) reported:

“When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was commanded to give the options to his wives, he started with me by saying:

“I am going to mention to you a matter which you should not decide in haste. You can answer after you have consulted your parents.” She said that he already knew that her parents would never allow her to seek separation from him. Then he said:

“Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: Prophet, say to your wives: If you desire this world’s life and its adornment, then come, I will give you a provision and allow you to depart a goodly departing; and if you desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, then Allah has prepared for the doers of good among you a great reward.” She is reported to have said:

“About what should I consult my parents, for I desire Allah and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter?” After that Aisha (r.a.) said: Then all the wives of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did as I had done.” (Muslim, Talaq, 29)

Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) considered himself as a traveler in this world and he lived thinking that soon he was going to leave this place and go to his actual abode. For him this world is like a tree under whose shadow he was taking a rest during his journey. (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 3) He was going to stay for a little under this tree and then continue on to his journey. Hence, he focused his heart on the real significant merits during his journey and taught these merits to humanity. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) lived all his life to achieve this goal. What would be the value of worldly possessions in the eyes of such a person? Of course, nothing; this is why Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) accepted the following line of poet Labid as the truest of words:

أَلَا كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مَّا خَلَا اللَّهَ بَاطِلٌ



“Indeed! Everything except Allah, is false.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 29) This is why even under the hardest circumstances of the Battle of the Trench, he expressed that his choice was the eternal life of the Hereafter saying: *“O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter...”* (Bukhari, Riqaq, 1) Again, his ascetic life can also be seen in his choice to live as a servant prophet instead of living as a king prophet.

Abu Sa'id reported that at the end of his life, Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) sat on the pulpit and said: *“Allah gave a choice to His servant that he may opt the beauties of the world or that which is with Him and the servant chose that which was with Him.”* (Muslim, Fadail al-Sahabah, 2) Thus, he showed that he never valued possessions of this world, and chose the Hereafter under any circumstances.

1. The Similitude of the Life in this World

It is frequently stated in the Qur'an that the life in this world is temporary and the actual and eternal life will be in the Hereafter:

“The similitude of the life of the world is only as water which We send down from the sky, then the earth's growth of that which men and cattle eat mingleth with it till, when the earth hath taken on her ornaments and is embellished, and her people deem that they are masters of her, Our commandment cometh by night or by day and We make it as reaped corn as if it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We expound the revelations for people who reflect.” (Yunus 10; 24)

This verse points out that the blessings of this world may seem like adornments but in reality one can unknowingly fall into its trap. Rumi (q.s.) elegantly states this reality in the following lines:

“Worldly wealth is like the spiritual smiles of Allah. It has made us drunken, vainglorious, and threadbare deprived of the means of salvation. O honorable man! Poverty and distress are better for you; for wealth, property, and possessions set up the trap of smile and then make you fall into it.” (Mathnawi, I, verses: 3040-41)⁴⁶

46. Right after Marmara earthquake on August 17th 1999, an old man was standing in front of his devastated house and looking around absentmindedly. His following answer to the question whether the devastated building belonged to him or not is very significant: “I thought so...”



The true face of the life of this world and its temporal ornaments is explained in another verse as follows:

“Set forth to them the similitude of the life of this world: it is like the rain which we send down from the skies: the earth’s vegetation absorbs it, but soon it becomes dry stubble, which the winds do scatter: it is (only) Allah who prevails over all things. Wealth and children are an ornament of life of the world. But the good deeds which endure are better in your Lord’s sight for reward, and better in respect of hope.” (al-Kahf 18; 45-46)

This verse attracts our attention to the importance of being cautious towards the mortal pleasures of this world and making every effort to gain the endless blessings of the Hereafter which is prepared for the believers. In this respect, Hariri states which can also be understood as an interpretation of the verse mentioned above:

“O the one who demands this lousy world! You should know that it is a death trap, and a sea of grief and anxiety. This world is such a place that makes you smile one day and makes you cry the very next day. Even if a rain cloud is seen in its skies, thirsty people do not benefit from it for it is a deception. This world’s troubles are endless. Even though those who become its slaves and sacrifice their honor and their entire wealth, they cannot escape from it. There are many people who commit all kinds of sins and are deceived by this world’s pleasures. Eventually it will turn against these people and attack them with its knife to take its revenge. Therefore be alert all your life and do not let it destroy you. You should stop loving it and cut all your ties with it so that you may attain salvation and richness of heart.” (*Maqamat*, p. 172)

As a matter of fact, it is not easy to not be deceived by this world and to cut the ties from it; because its love surrounds human beings from all sides. A Qur’anic verse in this respect makes the following statements:

“Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: women and sons; heaped up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence); and (wealth of) cattle and well tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world’s life; but in nearness to Allah is the best of the goals (to return to).” (Al-i Imran 3; 14)

Becoming attached to this world and inclining towards its blessings is a characteristic of human nature. Those who do not strengthen and mature them-

selves through spiritual training will be more susceptible by such influences. Whereas the essential thing to do is to attach the heart to Allah the Almighty and turn the blessings of this world into means to reach Allah's contentment. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) nicely depicts this state:

"This world is like a tree, O noble ones: and we are like the half-ripened fruit upon it. The unripe fruits cling fast to the bough, because during their immaturity they are not meet for the palace. When they have ripened and have become sweet—after that, biting their lips, they take but a feeble hold of the boughs. When the mouth has been sweetened by that felicity, the kingdom of the world becomes cold unpleasing to Man. To take a tight hold and to attach one's self strongly to the world is a sign of immaturity: as long as you are an embryo, your occupation is to suck blood and suffer." (Mathnawi, III, verses: 1293-97)

This is why our Lord states that **"Whoever desires the gain of the Hereafter, We will give him more of that gain; and whoever desires the gain of this world, We give him of it, and in the hereafter he has no portion."** (al-Shura 42; 20) and expresses that purified and disciplined souls desire the eternal blessings of the Hereafter and not the temporal wealth of this world.

Our Prophet (pbuh), who was adorned by the ethics of the Qur'an, always put the Qur'anic perception of this world and the Hereafter forward when training his companions. According to Jabir b. Abdullah's report, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) happened to walk through a bazaar while coming from the side of 'Aliya and there were companions with him. There he found a dead lamb with very short ears. He took hold of its ear and said:

"Who amongst you would like to have this for a dirham?"

They said: "We do not like to have it even for less than that as it is of no use to us." He said:

"Do you wish to have it free of any cost?" They said:

"By Allah, even if it were alive we would not have liked to possess it, for there is defect in it as its ear is very short; now it is dead, too. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said:

"By Allah, this world is more insignificant in the eye of Allah as this dead lamb is in your eye." (Muslim, Zuhd, 2)



In another saying of the Prophet (pbuh), it is stated that:

“If this world had any value even as much as the wing of a mosquito, He would not even let unbelievers drink a sip of water in this world.” Thus, he pointed out how insignificant this world and its entire wealth is in the eyes of Allah the Almighty. In this saying we are also taught not to admire the worldly possessions in the hands of the unbelievers. The warning of the following verse comprises the same meaning: **“Nor strain your eyes in longing for the things we have given for enjoyment to parties Of them, the splendor Of the life of this world, through which we test them: But the provision of the Lord is better and more enduring.”** (Taha 20; 131) In another saying of the Prophet (pbuh), it is expressed that those who are deceived by the mortal pleasures of this world will be disappointed in the Hereafter:

“Whoever is worried about the Hereafter, Allah the Almighty places richness in his/her heart, saves his/her works from disorder and this world comes to him/her in obedience. On the other hand whoever is worried about this world, Allah the Almighty places its poverty before his/her eyes; he/she will not be able to make two ends meet; and he/she will only get whatever his/her share from this world is.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 30) Rumi (q.s.) states:

“He who lacks the love for Allah and seeks the wealth of this world is the mere picture of poverty. Such a person does not have a spiritual life. He is not worthy of Divine bounty. Do not throw bread to the picture of a dog! He wants a morsel of food, he does not want Allah. Do not set dishes before a lifeless body! The dervish that wants bread is a land-fish: he has the form of a fish, but he is fleeing from the sea. He is a domestic fowl, not the bird of Zumrudu Anka which is on the mountain of closeness to Allah. He swallows sweet morsels of food, drinks tasty sherbets but he does not eat from the morsels of Allah. He loves Allah for the sake of food and drinks. His soul is not in love with Allah’s excellence and beauty of His face.” (Mathnawi, I, verses: 2752-56)

The following example nicely depicts the loss of those who incline towards worldly blessings and turn away from the Hereafter.

During the period of Umayyads, the Muslim army under the command of Abdurrahman b. Walid set out for an expedition to conquer Istanbul in order to attain the compliments and prophecy of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (r.a.) was in the army. While the Byzantines were fighting, an Ansari rode his horse towards them. When the believers saw this, they thought

about the verse “...**make not your own hands contribute to your destruction...**” (al-Baqarah 2; 195) They said in amusement:

“There is no god but Allah! Look at this man! He knowingly throws himself into danger.” Upon this Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (r.a.) told them:

“O believers! (Do not misunderstand me!) This verse was revealed about the community of Ansar. When Allah the Almighty bestowed His help upon us and made us victorious, we told ourselves: “From now on we can stay with our possessions and occupy ourselves with them.” Upon this Allah the Almighty revealed the following verse to His Messenger (pbuh):

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى
التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“**And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands, and do good (to others); surely Allah loves the doers of good.**” (al-Baqarah 2; 195) In this verse, what is meant by “**cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands**” is that do not engross yourselves into worldly property such as looking after gardens and forget to strive in the path of Allah.”

Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (r.a.), who sincerely followed this divine admonition, never inclined to the adornments and comfort of this world. He always strived for the sake of Allah, and finally he was martyred during that expedition and buried next to the walls of Istanbul.” (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 23; Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 2)

The following is another noteworthy anecdote in this regard.

During the Battle of Uhud Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) placed a few swordsmen on a hill and ordered them not to leave their places. Unfortunately some of them disobeyed his orders, left their positions, and rushed towards the booty. Allah the Almighty warned those who left their positions by saying: “**Some of you desired the world,**” while praising the martyrs saying “**some of you desired the Hereafter.**” (Al-i Imran 3; 152)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) pointed out the attractive side of this world saying: “*This world is enjoyable and its scene is pleasant.*” In the rest



of the tradition, he stated that the world is just a means of a test: *“Allah’s Apostle ascended to the pulpit and said, “Nothing worries me as to what will happen to you after me, except the temptation of worldly blessings which will be conferred on you.”* (Bukhari, Jihad, 37) In this and in other similar traditions, the Prophet (pbuh) expressed his concerns about how the Muslim ummah was going to incline towards this world in the future, forget the Hereafter, and for this reason they were going to fail the test. In fact, on the one hand, he was making the following admonitions:

“Nothing worries me as to what will happen to you after me, except the temptation of worldly blessings which will be conferred on you.” (Bukhari, Jihad, 37) On the other hand, he stated in another hadith that this world is a place where humans are being tested:

*“Every nation has (is tested by) a fitnah (mischief). And my ummah’s fitnah is worldly possessions.”*⁴⁷

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

47. Another story related to this issue is as follows: Once there was a slave named Ayaz. One day he was purchased by Sultan Mahmud. The Sultan loved this slave for his dignified character. He gained the Sultan’s respect so much that he was appointed as the State Treasurer and was entrusted with the most valuable jewelry. The household of the palace started to get jealous. They did everything they could to have him lose the Sultan’s favor. One day they said to each other in the presence of the Sultan: “Did you know that Ayaz, the slave, frequently goes to the treasury? He goes there every day, even when he is on vacation. He goes there and stays there for hours. I am sure he steals our jewelry.” The Sultan could not believe what he had just heard. He thought that “I should go and see what is really happening.” He had a small hole opened in the treasury’s wall and began to peek inside. Ayaz quietly entered into the room, locked the door, and came closer to the jewelry chest. He knelt down in front of the chest and opened it. He took something out of it. It was a small package. He kissed the package and then opened it. In it there were his shabby clothes from the slavery days. He took of his palace suit and put on these old clothes. Then he stood in front of a mirror and said to himself: “Do you remember who you were when you were in these clothes? You were nothing. You were just a slave to be sold. Through the hands of your Sultan, Allah the Merciful bestowed upon you endless blessings which you do not deserve. O Ayaz! You are here now but never forget who you were and where you came from. Because property and possessions can make you forget and be heedless. Do not be arrogant towards those who are below you and remember your previous state!” Then he closed and locked the chest, and walked quietly towards the door. When he was leaving the room, he suddenly met the Sultan. Tears were flowing down the Sultan’s face and he could barely speak: “Ayaz! Until now you were the treasurer of my possessions but now you are the treasurer of my heart. You have taught me that I am nothing and how I should behave in the presence of my Sultan.” (Muhyiddin Shakur, p. 114)

“Be cautious! Do not let your hopes and desires become strong and make you forget your end! Otherwise your hearts will get hardened. Be vigilant! Those which will come (i.e. death and afterlife) are soon coming...” (Ibn Majah, Muqaddimah, 7) Thus, he warned believers about the thoughts and concerns which keep the human mind busy and harden the heart.

The hopes and desires, mentioned in this hadith, infer to those which usually surround the lives of people and which make them get caught up in this world without making the necessary preparations for the Hereafter. Many people get even more attached to this world when they get older. In fact, the Prophet (pbuh) stated this issue in one of his sayings: *“The heart of an old man remains young in two respects, i.e., his love for the world (its wealth, amusements and luxuries) and his incessant hope.”* (Bukhari, Riqaq, 5) Ghazali expresses that ignorance and love of this world are the reasons for falling victim to one’s desires and hopes. He explains that in order to be saved from all these is to do as follows:

“Getting rid of ignorance can be achieved by listening to the words of righteous and sincere wise men. The only way to take the love of this world out of the hearts is to have faith in the Hereafter and the rewards awaiting there. When this faith reaches the level of certainty, the love for this world begins to move slowly away from the heart. Because loving the more significant one makes the less significant leave the heart.”

Allah the Almighty distributed the worldly blessings among His servants differently. Therefore, some servants are in the position of serving and others are in the position of being served. In other words, there is no equality in respect to possessing the blessings and opportunities. As a matter of fact this is stated in the Qur’an as follows:

“Is it they who apportion their Lord’s mercy? We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world, and raised some of them above others in rank that some of them may take labor from others; and the mercy of your Lord is better than (the wealth) that they amass.” (al-Zuhuf 43; 32) Allah’s Messenger talked about resigning one’s self to what is preordained as follows:

“Look at those who stand at a lower level than you but do not look at those who stand at a higher level than you, for this would make the favors conferred upon you by Allah insignificant in your eyes.” (Muslim, Zuhd, 9)





The following sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) show his perspective about this world and the Hereafter:

“Asceticism in this world means neither making the lawful unlawful nor losing the property and possessions, but it means to trust more what is in the hands of Allah than what is in your hands. And it also means that when something bad happens to you and as long as it continues, you should hope to get its rewards.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 29)

“By Allah, this world (is so insignificant in comparison) to the Hereafter that if one of you should dip his finger in the ocean and then he should see as to what has stuck to it.” (Muslim, Jannah, 55)

“The damage done by two hungry wolves set loose in a herd is not bigger than the damage done by a man who loves wealth and rank to his religion.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 43)

2. Examples from the Companions’ Ascetic Lives

In addition to the sayings and actions of the Prophet (pbuh) about his view on this world and the Hereafter, the reports from the lives of his distinguished companions are also significant. For instance, even though he was one of the richest men in Quraish, the Prophet’s best friend, Abu Bakr, spent all his wealth for the sake of Allah and lived a very humble life. Especially in the early and the most distressed days of Islam he bought Muslim slaves, who were being oppressed, and saved them from oppression by freeing them. His wealth did not hinder his asceticism; on the contrary by properly spending his wealth, he showed us how a pious life can be observed in wealth.

The following report about Abu Bakr (r.a.) clearly shows from what perspective he was looking at this world from and how much he was affected by the Prophet (pbuh). One day he was offered honey sherbet to drink. When he was taking the glass to his mouth, he began to cry. When he was asked the reason for his tears, he replied:

“Once I was with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Just then I saw that he was trying to send away something saying: *“get away from me, get away from me.”* But I could not see anything. When I asked what it was, the Prophet (pbuh) said:



"I was shown the world with its entire wealth. I told it to stay away from me. And it went away, but it said: 'By Allah even if you escape from me, those who will come after you will not be able to escape.'" Abu Bakr (r.a.) continued his words saying: "I got scared of getting too attached to this world and that is why I began to cry." (Abu Nuaym, I, 30-31)

Umar (r.a.) is also known for his extreme ascetic life. It is reported that during the years of his caliphate, Umar (r.a) gave sermons in a shirt which was patched in twelve different places. When his daughter Hafsa proposed that he wear some soft clothes and eat nice food, he talked to her about the Prophet's difficulties about sustenance and said:

"By Allah! If I can manage, I will follow the Messenger of Allah and Abu Bakr and live as they lived. Maybe in this way I, too, can reach the wonderful place they have reached in the Hereafter." (Ibn Hanbal, *Zuhd*, p. 125) As Yunuf Emre once said, "fleeing from this world is the most important act of worship."

Even though it is possible to find traces of the Prophet's ascetic life in all the companions, Abu Dhar (r.a.) is certainly one to come to mind; because Allah's Messenger praised him saying: *"whoever wants to see someone with little inclination to this world should look at Abu Dhar."* (Ibn Hanbal, *Zuhd*, p. 147) He became the representative of asceticism and piety until the end of his life. Even though 4000 dinar stipend was assigned for Abu Dhar Ghifari (r.a.), he used very little of this amount and donated the rest to the needy. (Abu Nuaym, I, 163) This companion, who said that in the Hereafter the questioning of the one who has two *dirhams* will be heavier than the one who has only one dirham. He once sent back three hundred dinars, which was sent by the governor of Damascus saying: *"Could not he find anybody else needier than me? I have a place to live, some sheep to get benefit, and a servant who helps in my work. I fear to have more than these."* (Ibn Hanbal, *Zuhd*, p. 147)

From the contents of the verses and sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) or from the practice in this regard, it should not be concluded that this world and its blessings are things to be decried in an absolute sense. The practice and texts can be better understood under the light of other verses and traditions. Otherwise making mistakes is inevitable. There is a neutral approach towards this world in about sixty verses in the Qur'an; and in about fifty verses there is a negative approach; and in seven verses there is a positive approach. While this world is decried in some Qur'anic verses, what is condemned in these verses



is not the world in its cosmic essence but the view of life which neglects the Hereafter. In the Qur'an the world appears in the Qur'an as a religious and ethical term, and the term "*ard* or earth" is used for its geographical meaning. According to the Qur'an, busying oneself with worldly life which does not hinder deeds for the Hereafter is not just something lawful but also brings happiness.

Since this world is the first station on the way to the Hereafter, a balance needs to be established between them. When people get ready for the Hereafter, they should also know how to benefit from the blessings of this world as it is pointed out in the verse: "**...and neglect not thy portion of the world...**" (al-Qasas 28; 77). Here, the important issue is not to get attached to the pleasures of this world and forget the Hereafter, but rather to use this world as a means for the Hereafter without letting it into the hearts. Rumi (q.s.) elegantly explains how the blessings of this world should be used:

"Water in the boat is the ruin of the boat, but water underneath the boat is a support. ... A bagpipe with a closed lid floated on the deep and endless water because it was filled with air. When the wind of poverty is within anyone, he rests at peace on the surface of the water of the world; although the whole of this world is his kingdom, in the eye of his heart the kingdom is nothing. Therefore fill your heart with the air of loftiness of "min ladun,"⁴⁸ and fill and seal the mouth of your heart." (Mathnawi, I, verses: 985-990)

On the other hand, the Prophet (pbuh) ordered that those who turn completely away from this world and try to live like priests to maintain a balanced life as follows: "*Your Lord has a right on you, your soul has a right on you, and your family has a right on you; so you should give the rights of all those who has a right on you.*" (Bukhari, Sawm, 51, 55) He also said that even though he was the most God-fearing believer, he refused priesthood in Islam. He did not even approve abandoning this world completely and he encouraged to always be in service by saying: "*Priesthood in Islam is to strive for the sake of Allah.*" (Ibn Hanbal, III, 266) In addition, the Prophet's (pbuh) advice to Ka'b b. Malik to: "*Keep some of your wealth for yourself, which is better for you*" and to Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas as follows: "*It is better for you to leave your inheritors wealthy than to leave them poor begging from others.*" (Bukhari, Wasaya, 2) are both the result of the same reason.



We also need to thoroughly understand the wisdom behind the reason to why the Prophet chose a simple life and even a life in poverty. First of all, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) opted for poverty in his personal life and spent generously everything he owned for the sake of his mission and for the welfare of his ummah. Moreover, his ascetic life has become an example for both the rich and the poor members of Muslim society. The affluent ones can learn how to follow an ascetic life in wealth from him; while the needy ones learn how to be patient against hardships and privation. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) warned his followers by saying, *"the poverty causing forgetfulness along with depraving richness"* (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 3) and *"Being wealthy does not mean, having a great amount of property, but it is self-contentment"* (Bukhari, Riqaaq, 15). Furthermore, in his prayers he would say, *"I take refuge in Allah from the mischief of wealth and poverty"* which show us that wealth and poverty are not good or bad in an absolute sense. In other words, these two facts should be assessed in relation to the person's situation. Throughout Islamic history, both the patient poor and the grateful rich have been praised and they have become the theme of many exemplary anecdotes.

B. PROPHET'S WAY OF EARNING HIS LIVELIHOOD

"O Allah! Make the blessings of the people of Muhammad in the extent of their need..."

Muslim, Zakat, 126

When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was in Mecca, he had special means to earn his livelihood; while in Medina fay' and war booty⁴⁹ became the source of his income.

However, these sources of income did not always happen to exist in the hands of the Prophet (pbuh) at the same time. In addition, when we consider the guests that the Prophet (pbuh) catered to and the needy members of the early Muslim society which he helped, we can see that he did not easily benefit

49. **Fay'**: is the revenues acquired peacefully from non-Muslims without having a battle. (al-Hashr 59; 6-7) These revenues are spent for the services of the state, such as salaries of government employees and soldiers, expenditures of defense, and other public works. **Ganimah or war booty**: is the property and slaves taken from an enemy in time of war. According to the chapter al-Anfal, four-fifth of these are distributed among the veterans. The rest one-fifth of the shares is assigned to Allah, to the Messenger, to near relatives, orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer. (al-Anfal 8; 41)





from these sources; rather he preferred to live an ascetic life. In fact this state can be observed in his eating and drinking, his clothes, his simple house life, and in his worldly inheritances.

1. Staying Hungry for Long Period of Time

Sometimes Allah's Messenger (pbuh) suffered from hunger for long periods of time due to the shortage of his means. When he had abundant means, he was content with having only a little and gave the rest as charity to the needy. This characteristic of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) constitutes the basic principle of his ascetic life. Abu Talha (r.a.) narrates: "We complained to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and showed him our bellies. Everybody had a rock tied to his belly. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) showed his abdomen to us. We saw that he had a stone tied over his belly, too."⁵⁰

According to the narration of Abu Hurairah (r.a.), one day a warm meal was brought to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). After he finished his meal, he said: "*Praise be to Allah, I have not had a warm meal in my stomach for quite a while.*" (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 10)

Allah's Messenger was faced with such situations many times throughout his prophetic life. Jabir (r.a.) talks about the trenches they dug in Battle of the Trench as follows:

"We were digging the trench on the day of Al-Khandaq (i.e. Trench) and we came across a big solid rock. We went to the Prophet and said,

"There is a rock appearing across the trench." He said,

"*I am coming down.*" Then he got up, and a stone was tied to his belly for we had not eaten anything for three days. So the Prophet took the spade and struck the big solid rock and it became like sand." (Bukahri, Maghazi, 29)

On another day Fatimah (r.a.) brought a piece of the pie she had baked to the Prophet (pbuh). When he asked what it was, Fatimah replied:

50. It is reported that from time to time Haji Bayram Wali would tie a rock over his belly in order to follow this tradition of the Prophet (pbuh). This rock has been exhibited in the Museum of Ethnography in Ankara under the name of "Black stone." In those days people were tying rocks over their bellies to suppress their hunger, while modern age people fill their stomachs to satiety and turn their bellies into rocks.



“It is a pie that I baked. I could not eat it without you.” Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) said to her:

“This is the first morsel that your father ate for the last three days.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 400; Haythami, X, 312)

Companions, who were always ready to give their lives and possessions for him, also experienced similar hardships. Abu Hurairah narrates that during his days of poverty and hardship he used to lay on the ground on his abdomen and sometimes he used to bind a stone over his belly because of hunger. (Bukhari, Riqaq, 17)⁵¹

As it is seen, the Prophet’s mission began and continued for a long period of time under very hard circumstances. Our Prophet (pbuh) never complained about these problems. On the contrary, he reminded his companions about the great rewards that they will receive for the hardships that they endure in the presence of Allah and advised them to stay calm and be patient. For instance, some of the companions of Suffa could not stand up in prayer and would fall down because of hunger. Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) comforted them saying: *“If you knew what Allah the Almighty has prepared for you, you would asked to be poorer and needier.”* (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 39)

The following incident is also a significant one that shows the extent of which the Prophet’s two distinguished companions’ hunger went through. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) went out of his house one night, and there he found Abu Bakr and ‘Umar also. He said:

“What has brought you out of your houses at this hour?”

They said:

“O Allah’s Messenger, it is hunger. Thereupon he said:

“By Him in Whose Hand is my life, what has brought you out has brought me out too; get up.”

They got up along with him and walked to the house of an Ansari, but he was not at home. When his wife saw the Prophet (pbuh) she said:

51. What we understand from such reports is that binding a stone over someone’s belly was a custom among Arabs in those days. Tying a stone over the abdomen reduces the pain caused by hunger and it is helpful in moving around. (Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, XI, 274-75)





“Most welcome,” and Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said to her:

“Where is so and so?”

She said:

“He has gone to get some fresh water for us.” When the Ansari came back and he saw Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) and his two Companions, he said:

“Praise be to Allah, no one has more honorable guests today than I (have). He then went out and brought them a bunch of ripe dates, dry dates and fresh dates, and said: Eat some of them. He then took a knife (to slaughter an animal). Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said to him:

“Beware of killing a milking animal.”

He slaughtered a sheep for them and after they had eaten of it and of the bunch and drank, and when they had taken their fill and had been fully satisfied with the drink, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said to Abu Bakr and Umar:

“By Him in Whose Hand is my life, you will certainly be questioned about this bounty on the Day of Judgment. Hunger brought you out of your house, then you did not return until this bounty came to you.” (Muslim, Ashribah, 140)

There is an important aspect of this report. Even the closest friends of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) did not know that the Prophet was in need. He often did not tell his needs and did not want to be a burden to anybody. As in the above mentioned hadith, although hunger, which took him out of his house with the hope of finding something to eat, also took his two best friends, Abu Bakr and Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) out of their houses, none of them told and complained about their suffering to anybody. They came across each other because of the same problem. Because all of the companions had adorned themselves with the morals of the Prophet (pbuh), they would prefer to hide their personal issues from others. Only when they were under extreme difficulties, they would ask for help from one of their brother.

Another significant point that we need to pay attention to is that the Prophet (pbuh) regarded the provisions attained after hunger as great blessings and stated that believers were going to be questioned for these blessings. This is an important message for the believers who have means, more or less.

At the head of the food list in the Prophet’s home came dates, milk, and barley bread; however he did not always have dates and milk. As a matter of



fact sometimes there was no cooked meal in his house for one or two months and during such days his family members were nourished by dates and water. (Bukhari, Hibah, 1) According to one report of Aisha (r.a.), the family of the Prophet (pbuh) never ate barley bread for two successive days and according to another report they never had wheat bread for three days consecutively. (Muslim, Zuhd, 20-22)

Even though barley and wheat breads were scarce during the Prophet's time in Hijaz, Allah's Messenger was one of the people who had the means to obtain it. However, he never tried to be different and have a better life than his community. When his people suffered from hunger, he and his family were among them; whereas Allah the Almighty offered to turn the valley of Mecca into gold for him. He did not accept his Lord's offer and preferred to spend some of his days full and some of them hungry. He asked Allah for a life that was accordant with the requirements of the social laws and did not prefer a miraculous and privileged life saying: *"O Allah! I pray and ask for Your help when I get hungry and when I get full I say my thanks and praises for You."* (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 35)

On the other hand, he displayed a dignified stance and never surrendered to privation. In other words, his sunnah presented a profile of a firm, optimistic, hopeful and upright standing person instead of a fallen, hopeless, overwhelmed, rebellious, and sad person. Prophetic attributes, such as altruism, patience, gratitude, and contentedness, are towards realization of this object.

We learn from the books of hadith and life of the Prophet that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) consumed a modest sustenance and he did not have any special foods compared to his companions. He did not attach too much importance to eating. According to Ummu Aiman's (r.a.) report, one day she sifted some flour and wanted to bake a special bread for the Prophet (pbuh); but Allah's Messenger (pbuh) did not allow her saying: *"Remix the whole-wheat, which you sieved with the flour and knead dough with it."* (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 44)

Jabir b. 'Abdullah reported that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked his family for a condiment. They said: We have nothing with us but vinegar. He asked for it and then said the following:

"What good condiment vinegar is! What good condiment vinegar is!" (Muslim, Ashriba, 166)





Once the Prophet (pbuh) took a piece of barley bread and put a date on it and said: This date is the condiment of this bread.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 41)

According to the narration of Aisha (r.a.), the Prophet (pbuh) used to eat melon with fresh dates, and then he said: *“The heat of the one is broken by the coolness of the other, and the coolness of the one by the heat of the other.”* (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 36)

What Allah’s Messenger liked best was *tharid* which was made by mixing pieces of bread in a meat stock. (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 22) It is also reported that he liked sweets especially honey. (Tirmidhi, At’imah, 29) However, it is also a fact that he usually did not have those foods at his dinner table.

However, we should not think that the Prophet (pbuh) was subjecting his family with complete hunger. A date grove of Bani An-Nadir was given to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as a gift in the fourth year of migration. He used to sell the harvest of this garden and store enough food for his family that would cover their needs for a whole year. (Bukhari, Nafaqat, 3) As Ummu Salamah (r.a.) was talking about the milking animals of the Prophet (pbuh), she said that: “we were making most of our living from camels and sheep.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 496)

On the other hand, not only were the members of the Prophet’s family but also some homeless and poor companions (the companions of Suffa), who stayed next to the Prophet’s mosque and spent their entire time with learning Islam, were maintaining their living by means of the Prophet’s support. Because of his responsibility of being head of the state, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) considered those companions’ support equal to supporting his household. In fact, when Abu Hurairah (r.a.) was asked about why the Prophet (pbuh) suffered from hunger, he made the following statements:

“It was because of the number of the people around him and the multitude of his guests; for the Prophet (pbuh) would not eat anything without accompanied by some of his companions or some needy people from his mosque. After Allah the Almighty bestowed the conquest of Haibar upon believers, they felt a little relief. However they were still having financial problems.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 409)

The companions of Suffa were the guests of Muslims. Neither did they have families to depend upon, nor did they own any money or property. Whenever an object of charity was brought to the Prophet (pbuh), he would send all



of it to the Companions and would not take anything from it, and whenever a present was given to him, he would send some to them and keep some of it for himself. (Bukhari, Riqaa, 17) Therefore, the reason for having just water and dates for food in the Prophet's home and his hunger for long periods of time was because he was sharing generously whatever he had with the needy. In other words, the reason for the financial hardship that he experienced in his life was not because he did not have the means but, as it was mentioned above, the numbers of the needy that he was helping. Thus, the Prophet (pbuh) personally lived in accordance with his following saying:

"The one who eats to fill while his /her neighbors are hungry is not a true believer." (Hakim, II, 15)

On the other hand, companions who attained wealth by means of conquests made after the time of Prophet (pbuh) had serious concerns about benefiting from their wealth even though it was licit for them. In this respect, they sometimes spoke about their earlier state of privation. For instance, one day a richly prepared dinner table was prepared for Abdurrahman b. Awf (r.a.) while he was fasting, and he said:

"Mus'ab b. Umayr was martyred and he was better than I am, and he had nothing except his mantle to be shrouded in. Hamza or another person was martyred and he was also better than I am and he had nothing to be shrouded in except his Burd. No doubt, I fear that the rewards of my deeds might have been given early in this world." Then he started weeping and left the table. (Bukhari, Janaiz, 27)

Once Umar (r.a.) ran into Jabir (r.a.), who was holding a piece of meat, and asked him:

"What is this?" Jabir replied:

"I bought some meat because of my craving for it." Then Umar (r.a.) warned him:

"Do you buy everything that you long for? Are you not afraid of being one of those who are mentioned in the verse: **"You received your good things in the life of the world, and you took your pleasure out of them..."**" (al-Ahqaf 46; 20)" (Ibn Hanbal, *Zuhd*, 124)





In conclusion, as a significant aspect of their ascetic lives, both the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions who would stay hungry for extended periods of time and who were content with less.

2. His Simple Life at Home

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had temporarily stayed in Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (r.a.) house, before he moved to his own rooms built next to his mosque. According to the reports, at first there were only two rooms. One of them belonged to the Prophet's wife Sawda (r.a.), and the other one was for Aisha (r.a.), to whom the Prophet (pbuh) was married to but had not yet consummated the marriage. According to some reports, there was a third room for Ummu Gulsum and Fatimah, the Prophet's daughters, who were single at that time. (Hamidullah, II, 1053-54) Later, the number of rooms increased in accordant with the needs. Some of the rooms were built from brick and others were made from stone and had roofs which were covered by date branches. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 499; Suhayli, I, 248) From descriptions it is understood that the rooms were pretty small. For instance, Aisha's room was so small that once when the Prophet (pbuh) was prostrating in night prayer, he touched Aisha, who was sleeping at the time, and she drew up her legs to open some space for the Prophet (pbuh). (Muslim, Salat, 272)

Hasan al-Basri, who spent his childhood in a house close to the Prophet's house, narrated that he could touch the ceiling of the Prophet's rooms. (Ibn Sa'd, VII, 161; Suhayli, I, 248) This statement shows that his rooms were not very high.

The doors of the Prophet's rooms were made from black haircloth. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 499)

One of the prominent Imams of the Tabi'un generation⁵² Said b. al-Musayyab expressed his sadness from the destruction of these rooms during the time of Umayyads as follows:

"By Allah, How much I would love to see these rooms as they were! Thus people who came to visit them could see how Allah's Messenger had lived and how he had not inclined to gather and been proud of property in this world." (Ibn Sa'd, I, 499-500)

52. * The generation succeeded the companions.



Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had a bed⁵³ made out of dry tree branches which were tied together with date fibers. He used to sit or put his mattress on this bed. His was made of a leather case stuffed with palm fibers. (Bukhari, Riqaq, 17) According to the narration of Aisha (r.a.), when a woman saw that the Prophet's mattress was like a thin blanket, she run to her home and brought a comfortable wool mattress for him. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) expressed his discontent and told Aisha:

"O Aisha! Take this mattress immediately back to its owner."

Aisha (r.a) tells the rest of the incident as follows: "I did not take the mattress back right away. Indeed I liked having such a comfortable mattress in my home. However, the Prophet (pbuh) told me to take it back three times and then he said:

"By Allah! If I wanted, Allah the Almighty would make gold and silver mountains walk by me and place them under my command." (Ibn Sa'd, I, 465)

When Hafsa (r.a.) was asked about how the Prophet's mattress had been, she described it saying:

"He used to sleep on a woolen two-fold mat. It was a hard mat, thus one day I thought that if I fold it, it would be softer and the Prophet (pbuh) would rest more comfortably. So I folded it. When Allah's Messenger (pbuh) woke up in the morning, he asked:

"What kind of mattress did you prepare for me last night?"

We told him:

"It was your old mat, but we just folded it for your comfort." Upon this he said:

53. Aisha (r.a.) narrates: "There was nothing more delightful to the people of Quraish than to sleep on their beds. When the Prophet (pbuh) migrated to Medina and settled in Abu Ayyub's house, he asked Abu Ayyub: "O Abu Ayyub! Don't you have a bed?" Abu Ayyub replied: "By Allah! No, I do not." When Sa'd b. Zurarah (r.a.) heard this, he sent a mattress made from wood, woven with linens and covered with a straw mat. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) used this bed to rest till the end of his life. When the Prophet (pbuh) passed away, he was washed and shrouded on this mattress. And his funeral prayer was performed while his body was lying on it. People used to ask for this mattress from us to carry their dead on it and hoping to receive Allah's blessing by means of it. Funerals of Abu Bakr and Umar were also carried on it." (Baladhuri, I, 525)





“Change it to its old state, for I felt sluggish and it prevented me from waking up for night prayer.” (Tirmidhi, *Shamail*, p. 154)

In some narrations, it is also reported that Allah’s Messenger used a blanket to cover himself while sleeping. (Ibn Majah, *Taharah*, 121)

We see that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), who preferred a simple bed for resting, sometimes slept on a straw mat. This is why some companions offered to prepare a more comfortable bed for him, and our Prophet (pbuh) told them:

“What should I do with this world? My similitude and that of the life of this world is that of a traveler who took a rest at mid-day under a shade of a tree and then left it.” (Ibn Majah, *Zuhd*, 3; Ibn Hanbal, I, 391)

Umar (r.a.), who visited the Prophet (pbuh) in one of his rooms, said that:

“I entered upon Allah’s Apostle and saw him lying on a bed made of stalks of date palm. There was no bedding between it and him. The stalks left marks on his side and he was leaning on a leather pillow stuffed with date-palm fibers. Then I looked around his house, and by Allah, I could not see anything of importance in his house except three hides, so I said,

“O Allah’s Apostle! Invoke Allah to make your followers rich, for the Persians and the Romans have been made prosperous and they have been given (the pleasures of the world), although they do not worship Allah.” Thereupon the Prophet sat up as he was reclining and said,

“Are you of such an opinion, O the son of Al-Khattab? These are the people who have received the rewards for their good deeds in this world.” (Bukhari, *Nikah*, 83)

According to another report, when Umar (r.a.) saw the marks that the palms left on the Prophet’s body, he was brought to tears (on seeing this extremely austere living of the Holy Prophet), and he said: Ibn Khattab, what wakes you weep?

I said:

“O Apostle of Allah! Why should I not shed tears? This mat has left its marks on your sides; Roman and Persian rulers are leading their lives in plenty, whereas you are Allah’s Messenger, and His chosen one; however that is your state!” He said:



“O Ibn Khattab, aren’t you satisfied that there should be the prosperity of the Hereafter for us, and for them there should be the prosperity of this world?” (Muslim, Talaq, 31)

In this prophetic tradition, it is not meant the management of this world but rather its ornaments and grandeur; because Islam is just against a wasteful and luxurious life.

Ali (r.a.) states that when he got married to Fatimah (r.a), they only owned a bed made from sheep skin. (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 11) And Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) advised patience to his daughter who was complaining about this situation. (Diyarbekri, I, 412)

Once the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) came to Fatimah and found a curtain hanging at her door, so he did not enter. He stated his dislike saying:

“What have I to do with this world and everything in it?” Fatimah (r.a.) became very sorry for it. She asked her father what she should do about the curtain; and the Prophet told her to give it to another family. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 43)

Anas (r.a.), who served the Prophet (pbuh) for nine years, describes the utensils that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) used and how his dinner tables as follows: “I have never seen the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) take his meals in a big tray. Nor did he ever eat well-baked thin bread, nor did he ever eat at a dining table.” When Qatadah (r.a.), the narrator of this tradition, was asked “Over what did they use to take their meals?” Qatada said, “On leather dining sheets.” (Bukhari, At’imah, 8)⁵⁴

In another narration, it is pointed out that the Prophet (pbuh) was not served food and drink in bowls. He sat on the ground and his meals were served on dining sheets.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 372)

Bowls and other dining utensils stated in such traditions were the embellished and valuable products of Iran and other civilizations. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) preferred a simple life over the lifestyles of the kings. He indeed ex-

54. Because of his ascetic life, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) abstained from eating that type of food and using luxurious dining materials. However, the Prophet’s behavior does not show that it is unlawful to use them, because this tradition is just establishing an exemplary state.





pressed his choice of a moderate life saying: *“I am just a servant of Allah. I eat just as a servant eats and drink like a servant drinks.”* (Munawi, II, 724)

As for the cooking chores in the Prophet’s family, although sometimes they had been helped by servants, our mothers often cooked the meals. (Hamid-ullah, II, 1078) For instance, Safiyah (r.a.) was a wonderful cook. Aisha (r.a.) said about her that she had never seen such a wonderful cook. (Abu Dawud, Buyu’, 89) One day Aisha (r.a.) cooked a type of soup called *“harirah”* and offered it to Sawdah (r.a.). Upon Sawdah’s refusal of her offer, she rubbed some of the soup on to Sawdah’s face. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) smiled at their little argument and insisted Sawdah to do the same to Aisha in return. (Haythami, IV, 315-16)

The Prophet (pbuh) would pay close attention to his family’s chores at home. A few times when Aisha (r.a.) was asked about what the Prophet (pbuh) did at home, she gave the following answers:

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was a human being. He used to sew his clothes, milk his sheep, and do his own work.” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 256)

“He used to repair his shoes, patch his clothes just like you do.” (Ibn Hanbal, VI, 106)

“He used to work for his family, and as soon as he heard the call for the prayer, he would immediately go to perform his prayer.” (Bukhari, Nafaqat, 8)

Nevertheless, there had been some people who served even worked as the Prophet’s guards. For instance, a companion named Haytham b. Nasr narrated that he had served the Prophet (pbuh), kept guard at his door, and brought him fresh water from the well of Abu Haytham. (Ibn Hajar, *Isabah*, III, 615) Rabia b. Qa’b al-Aslami (r.a.) said: “I used to spend my nights at the Prophet’s door and bring him water for ablution. I sometimes could hear him saying *“Sami Allahu liman Hamidah* – Allah has heard those who praised Him” and sometimes saying *“Alhamdu lilahi rabbil alamin* –All praises are due to Allah, Lord of the worlds.” (Ibn Sa’d, IV, 313) The same companion narrates the following incident:

“I was with Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) one night, and I brought him water and things that he required. He said to me:

“Ask anything you like from me.”



I said:

“I ask for your company in Paradise.” The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Would you like anything else besides this?”

I said:

“That is all that I would like.”

He said:

فَاعِنِّي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ

“Then help me to achieve this for you by devoting yourself often to prostration.” (Muslim, Salat, 226)

The following narration of Anas b. Malik is also well-known:

“I served the Prophet (pbuh) at Medina for ten years. I was a boy. Every work that I did was not according to the desire of my master, but he never said to me: Fie, nor did he say to me: Why did you do this? Or why did you not do this?” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 1)

Abdullah b. Mas’ud (r.a.) used to serve the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), wake him up, help him to wear his shoes, and accompany him when he wanted to go somewhere. (Ibn Sa’d, III, 153)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not appoint anybody to mediate between him and his people. However, he sometimes had voluntary doorkeepers when he was busy with his personal business. These doorkeepers would change from time to time. Among them were companions such as the Prophet’s emancipated slave Anas and Rabah al-Aswad (may Allah be pleased with both of them). (Bukhari, Janaiz, 32; Ibn Hajar, *Isabah*, I, 75, 502)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) usually would not appoint anybody to do two tasks: One of them was to pour water for his ablution when he woke up for night prayer and the other one was to distribute his charity to the needy. He would prefer to give his charity personally. (Ibn Sa’d, I, 369; Ibn Abi Shaybah, I, 178) Abdullah b. Allah (may Allah be pleased with both of them) narrates: “Allah’s Messenger would not bother anybody with his ablution water and distribution



of his charity. He would prepare his own water and personally distribute his charity.” (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 30)

In short, the Prophet (pbuh) did not prefer to live a prosperous life in a society where most of its members were poor. The style of his house and the furniture in it as well as his efforts to do his own work are all very good examples that show how one can live a simple and moderate life. The state in which he lived (or his ascetic lifestyle) was something required by his message. The mission that he represented advised him to live the poverty in richness, to be altruistic, and to live to help others. Thus, he first applied these advices and commands in his own life and became a paradigm for all times and places.

3. His Apparels / Clothing

Just like all of other aspects of the Prophet’s life, his apparels were matters of interest for his wives, other companions, and for the entire Muslim community. This is why what he wore or did not wear; what he suggested to wear or warned about wearing have been carefully studied.

a. His Turban

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) often wore a hat called “*qalansuwah*,” rolled his turban around it, and swung its one end between his shoulders. (Tirmidhi, Libas, 12) He wore his turban constantly and stated that the turban was apparel also worn by the angels. According to reports, on the night of ascension the Prophet (pbuh) had seen most of the angels wearing turbans. (Haythami, V, 120)⁵⁵

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) often wore a white turban. He also advised his followers to wear white apparel in general. (Tirmidhi, Adab, 46) According to the

55. It is known that Allah’s Messenger’s head was always covered and he always performed his prayers with his head covered. This is why Muslim jurists have considered that it is reprehensible for a believer not to cover his head because of laziness or negligence; because, it was the tradition of the Prophet (pbuh). The command in the verse (7; 31) about wearing embellishments at the places of worship also includes the covering of heads for males. This is why wearing a skullcap during prayer is considered as something recommended by all the schools of Islamic law. Thus, covering the head with a skullcap or something similar in a way that does not hinder the prostration is more virtuous. If someone drops his skullcap during prostration, it is even recommended to pick it up without making too many moves. However, a believer is also allowed to not wear a head cover during prayer because of an excuse or because of modesty and piety. (Kawthari, p. 258-59; Hamdi Döndüren, p. 270-71)

reports, the Prophet (pbuh) entered Mecca after the conquest wearing a black turban and during his victory speech he wore the same black turban. (Muslim, Hajj, 451) It is also reported that he sometimes dyed his turban in yellow by saffron. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 452; Ibn Abi Shaybah, V, 160)

b. His Clothes

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) used to wear two pieces of clothing. The one which was worn above the waist is called “*rida*” and the one worn below the waist is called “*izar*.” (Ibn Sa'd, I, 452) In the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh), the term “*thawban* or two pieces of clothes” is used for these clothes. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 19) However, the clothing which Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) liked best was a shirt called “*qamis*”, which was a long shirt that reached his feet. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 3) In addition to those, he would sometimes wear a cloak or vest like apparel over his daily clothes. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 450, 451, 453, 461) It is also reported that he sometimes wore something like baggy trousers called “*sirwal*.” (Haythami, V, 121)

Allah’s Messenger also had clothes for special occasions. For instance, he used to wear a red gown on Fridays; and there are also reports about a dress made in Hadhramaut that he wore when welcoming foreign delegates. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 451, 458) Besides his daily apparel, the Prophet (pbuh) also had special clothes that he wore at night. (Hamidullah, II, 1077)

As for the materials of the Prophet’s clothes, we know that in accordance with the circumstances that he sometimes wore clothes made from cotton and wool, and sometimes he wore clothes made from thick animal hair. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 5) These clothes were in different colors like white, black, yellow, green, and red. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 449-56) However, the Prophet (pbuh) preferred and advised his followers to wear white colored clothes when it is possible. In fact, in one of his sayings he advised that not only should the living believers wear white colored clothes but also the dead ones as follows:

“Wear white clothes, since white clothes are cleaner and better in appearance. Shroud your dead in white, too.” (Tirmidhi, Adab, 46) In this saying, he also points out that the primary and important requirement in clothes is their cleanliness.





Allah's Messenger (pbuh) did not like to have a bad smell on his clothes. Once he wore a black wool cloak. When he sweated in it and noticed the odor of the wool, he threw it away. Aisha (r.a.), who narrated this tradition, told us that the Prophet (pbuh) always liked nice fragrances. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 19)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) refrained from wearing clothes which may attract too much attention or lead to vanity. Once he had worn a silk dress which was given to him by the Emperor of Byzantine as a gift. However, it attracted so much attention that companions asked the Prophet (pbuh) whether it was sent down from the heavens. Then he never wore it again and sent it to Negus Ashama as a gift. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 456, 457)

First, Allah's Messenger had worn silk clothes, but later he stopped wearing them and forbade wearing silk to the male members of his community. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) took silk and held it in his right hand, and took gold and held it in his left hand and said:

"Both of these are prohibited to the males of my community." (Abu Dawud, Libas, 11)

On the other hand, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had never been desirous to throw away his old clothes and wear the new ones. He sometimes even wore patched, old, and almost colorless clothes. Qayla bint Mahramah narrates: "When I saw the Prophet (pbuh), he was wearing a two-piece cloth, which looked like a piece of sheet, dyed with saffron; but its color was fading because of oldness." (Tirmidhi, Adab, 50) Again according to the narration of Aisha (r.a.), when the Prophet (pbuh) passed away, he had been wearing two pieces of clothes, one of them was patched and the other one was pretty rough. (Muslim, Libas, 35; Tirmidhi, Libas, 10)

c. His Socks and Shoes

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wore different types of socks and shoes in accordance with his means and the conditions of the place. (Abu Dawud, Taharah, 62; Tirmidhi, Taharah, 74)

He wore shoes called "*na'lain*" and a type of socks called "*khuffain*." According to Buraidah (r.a.) the Emperor of Abyssinia sent the Prophet (pbuh) a pair of black, plain and seamless *khuffain*. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wore them while he was in ritual purity; and then he did not wash his feet but just



wiped over them while performing ablution. (Abu Dawud, Taharah, 60) According to another narration, Dihyat al-Kalbi gave the Prophet (pbuh) a pair of *khuffain* and a cloak as a gift, and he kept wearing them until they were completely worn out. (Tirmidhi, Libas, 30)

The Prophet's socks called *khuffain* were not like regular socks which are worn with shoes, but a type of foot wear which can be worn separately like a pair of boots. In time the *khuffain* has turned into leather socks maybe because of its easiness in performing ablution.

The other type of shoes that was worn by Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was called *na'lain* and it was similar to sandals. It had a bridge-like strap on it. Another apparent characteristic of these shoes was that it had a lace called *iqal*, which was attached to the strap. The material used for its production was a tanned hide.

Ibn Abbas (r.a.) narrates: "Prophet's *na'lain* had two *qibals*⁵⁶ and its straps were two folded." (Ibn Majah, Libas, 27)

Abdullah b. Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said: "I saw Allah's Apostle wearing leather shoes that had no hair, and he used to perform the ablution while wearing them. Therefore, I like to wear such shoes." (Bukhari, Libas, 37; Muslim, Hajj, 25)

d. His Ring and Seal

In the sixth year of migration after migrating from Mecca to Medina and gathering believers under a political unity, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wanted to write letters to the neighboring states and invite them to Islam. It was said to him, "They do not accept any letters unless they are stamped." So the Prophet had a silver ring made for himself." (Bukhari, Libas, 50)

The Arabic word for the ornament that we have translated as seal is "*khatam*". It also means "a ring." In fact, the Prophet's seal was in the shape of a ring. This seal which was called "*Khatam al-Nabi* – Seal of the Prophet" or "*Khatamu Rasulillah* – Seal of the Messenger of Allah" was made from silver, and its stone was of silver too." (Bukhari, Libas, 48) There were three words en-

56. *Qibal* is a cord, which attaches the bottom of a sandal and goes between the middle toe and the one next to it.



graved upon the ring. The engraving was in three lines: ‘Muhammad’ in one line, ‘Messenger’ in another line, and ‘Allah’ in a third line. (Bukhari, Libas, 55)

Some companions wanted to have a similar ring made for themselves, but the Prophet (pbuh) forbade them saying: *“no one is allowed to have a ring which is engraved with the inscription of my seal.”* (Ibn Hanbal, III, 290)

After the death of the Prophet (pbuh), the seal of the Messenger of Allah was passed on to Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman (may Allah be pleased with all of them) respectively. However, in the sixth year of Uthman’s caliphate it fell into the well called Eris in Medina and got lost. (Bukhari, Libas, 50)⁵⁷

e. His Cleaning Equipment and Ornaments

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) paid close attention not only his hygiene but also to tidiness. He would comb his hair and beard whenever it was necessary; dye his hair with henna and anoint it with olive oil. (Tirmidhi, *Shamail*, p. 18-27) He would never neglect to clean his teeth and frequently would brush them with a tooth-stick during the day. (Muslim, *Taharah*, 42) It is also recorded that the Prophet (pbuh) used to tinge his eyes with kohl before going to bed.⁵⁸ Nice fragrances also had a special place in the Prophet’s life for it was one of the three things he loved. Anas b. Malik (r.a.) narrated:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had a perfume bottle with which he perfumed himself.” (Abu Dawud, *Tarajjul*, 2)

On the other hand, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would not approve to spend too much time for caring for one’s hair and clothes; and he stated that just like cleanliness, plainness of the garments was a part of faith. (Abu Dawud, *Tarajjul*, 1) Indeed we find out that his equipment for taking care of his hair and clothes were very simple. Among them were a mirror, comb, scissors, tooth-stick, a container for kohl, a bottle or a box for perfume, and muslin. (Ibn Sa’d, I, 484)

57. A story is told about the losing the seal of the Prophet (pbuh). According to the story, the Prophet’s seal had some secrets hidden in it like the seal of the Prophet Solomon. When the seal of the Prophet Solomon got lost, his reign shook and then collapsed. Similarly, when the Prophet’s seal got lost during Uthman’s caliphate, unrest began in the government, rebels from Egypt and Iraq revolted and the unrest, which led to the Caliph’s assassination, could not be stopped. (Ali Yardim p. 145)

58. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) suggested that his followers use a type of kohl, which is made from a stone called *ismid*. He expressed that this was good for the eyes and the eyelashes. (Tirmidhi, *Libas*, 23)

The Prophet (pbuh) would also take these equipments with him to his journeys. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 484)

f. His Rides

There were some rides used by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The camel named Quswa, which the Prophet (pbuh) rode during his migration to Medina, was very famous. The Prophet (pbuh) also owned a horse named Sakb that he rode for the first time in the Battle of Uhud. He had other horses given to him as presents by his companions. His mule named Duldul and his donkey named Ya'fur were among his well-known rides. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 489-92)

g. His Armaments

Besides the daily garments of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he also owned equipment as a commander to use on the battle field, such as armor, a sword, and a helmet.

His armor was a vest made from entwined small rings, which protected him from enemy attacks. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wore such armor especially in the Battles of Uhud and Khaibar. The Prophet's vests had different names such as *dhat'ul fudul*, *su'adiyah*, *fidda*, *batra*, and *harnaq*. (Zahabi, *al-Sirah*, I, 430) The Prophet (pbuh) died while his iron armor was mortgaged to a Jew for some barley. (Bukhari, Jihad, 89)

The Prophet (pbuh) was wearing a helmet while entering Mecca on the day of the conquest. (Bukhari, Jihad, 169)

Among the weaponry of the Prophet (pbuh), there were his swords which were named *zulfikar*, *kala'i*, *battar*, and *hatf*. *Zulfikar* which had been taken as war booty in the Battle of Badr was a well-known sword. In fact, it has been part of the following proverb: "La sayfa illa zulfikar wa la fata illa Ali – there is no sword except zulfikar and there is no brave man except Ali" (Ajluni, II, 506)

The Prophet (pbuh) possessed three bayonets and three bows. In fact, it is reported that his bows were named *rawha*, *bayza*, and *safra*. He also had a shield with a picture of a ram on it, but he had this picture erased from his shield for he did not like depictions. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 479)





In short, in this section of this book about the garments and equipment of the Prophet (pbuh), it appears that in this respect Allah's Messenger (pbuh) preferred plainness as he did in every other aspect of his life. He did not act like a king who possessed all kinds of means.

4. His Worldly Inheritance

The Prophet (pbuh), who regarded this world as a place of making preparations for the Hereafter and who lived his life knowing that only righteous deeds would give eternal benefits, said that:

"We (Prophets) do not bequeath anything to our heirs, but whatever we leave is to be given in charity." (Bukhari, Nafaqat, 3) Therefore, it is obvious that his inheritance could only be a few absolute necessities.

According to the narration of Juwayriyah (r.a.), when Allah's Apostle died, he did not leave any dirham or dinar (i.e. money), a slave or a slave woman or anything else except his white mule, his arms and a piece of land which he had given in charity." (Bukhari, Wasaya, 1)

As a matter of fact, based on the above mentioned saying of the Prophet (pbuh), all the real estate left by the Prophet (pbuh) were regarded as endowments. In addition, as real estate he left the above mentioned lands and the rooms built for his wives. However, another prophetic saying states that *"... My heirs will not inherit a dinar or a dirham (i.e. money), for whatever I leave excluding the adequate support of my wives and the wages of my employees is given in charity (or is an endowment)"*; thus, he points out the need for providing the livelihood and residence for his wives after his death.⁵⁹

In fact, Allah's Messenger had endowed everything he owned for the benefit of the public during his life provided that he was going to use them until his death. In other words, from these lands he was separating the sustenance of his family and spending the rest for the needs of the Muslim state and community. (Nawawi, *Sharhu Sahih Muslim*, XII, 82) Thus, after his death his blessed wives were not left alone; their sustenance was provided for through these lands and they continued to live in their rooms till they passed away. (Mawardi, 217-21)

59. Bukhari, Wasaya, 32; Muslim, Jihad, 55. The word "employee" means the workers who were taking care of Prophet's lands and date grove. In fact such a worker, who was taking care of the Prophet's date grove, was mentioned in some other reports. (Muslim, *Musaqat*, 99-100)



Endowments of the Messenger of Allah and his following saying opened a new era for humanity. “Abu Huraira (r.a.) reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying: When a man dies, his acts come to an end, but three: a recurring charity, or knowledge (by which people) benefit, or a pious son, who prays for him (for the deceased).” (Muslim, Wasiyyah, 14) From the first days of Islam up until today many Muslims have been doing their best to follow the Prophet’s advice. They have established several endowments and supported various charitable institutions. Thus, they have established ways to earn continuous spiritual rewards and presented humanity with a unique civilization of endowments.

In conclusion, our Prophet (pbuh) preferred to live a simple, modest, and an honorable life by being patient when he was in need and helping and giving to others when he had the means. Because he advised his followers to live a life based on ascetic principles not a life based on competition of earning more wealth. He explained to them how excessive ambition and worldly desires might lead to all kinds of mischief; and he showed them the best way to live an Islamic life. The order in his home, his garments, his food, his drinks, along with his guiding words and advices, or his worldly inheritance are the best witnesses of this reality.

How happy those who benefit from the guidance of the Prophet’s ascetic life are!





CHAPTER TWO

THE BEST EXAMPLAR IN HIGH MORALS

PROPHET'S EXCELLENCE IN MORALS





“And lo! You are of a tremendous nature.” (al-Qalam 68; 4)

PROPHET'S EXCELLENCE IN MORALS

The word *akhlaq* is the plural form of the Arabic word *khulq*, which means habit, nature, disposition, and character. The word *khulq* also states an essence which can be perceived by the heart, felt by the senses, and represented by the soul. *Khulq* may refer to both good and bad morals. Good morals mean that the human self is in moderation in its characteristics and powers; and it also means that the human self chooses the moderate path. In other words, good moral is choosing goodness and abstaining from evil by free-will. And the opposite is called bad morals.

Good morals are considered like an elixir that completes the faith, makes virtue perfect, beautifies life, gets the believer closer to Allah the Almighty, and captivates everybody's heart. They are the shadows of the Divine attributes upon human beings and they are the reflections of these attributes in servants. This is why adorning oneself with good morals is a sign of getting closer to Allah the Almighty and the opposite is a clear sign of getting away from the Divine attributes. Because of their significance, good morals have been considered as one of the objects of the acts of worship. For instance, one of the objects of ritual prayer and fasting in the month of Ramadan is to help the believer to achieve good morals. Good morals are sometimes even elevated to the level of supererogatory prayer and fasting. In addition, the spiritual rewards of such acts of worship can be obtained through good morals. In fact, the Prophet (pbuh) said in this regard that:

"By his good character a believer will attain the degree of one who prays during the night and fasts during the day." (Abu Dawud, Adab, 7)

Good morals are important not only for the members of a society but also for the society as a whole. Peace, happiness, and order in a society can be achieved through good morals. Just as the force of attraction among the planets in the universe is very essential, good morals have a similar significance for the individuals and the society. Degradation is inevitable for a society in which good morals have decayed. According to Abu Hurairah (r.a.) report, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:





“You cannot satisfy and make human beings happy by giving them charity. (Your wealth could not be enough for that.) Therefore try to make them happy by your smiling faces and good morals.” (Hakim, I, 212)

Allah the Almighty not only loves His servants who have good morals but also makes others love them, too. If a believer adorns himself/herself with good morals, then he/she lives the life of Paradise both in this world and in the Hereafter. When the Prophet (pbuh), who said that *“the most mature of the believers in faith is the one who has the best morals”* (Ibn Hibban, IX, 483), and was asked what gets a believer closer to Paradise, he replied saying:

“Being fearful of Allah the Almighty and good morals.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 62)

Again, those who have good morals will be the closest ones to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), who has the highest place in the Hereafter. This good news was given by the Prophet himself in his following saying: *“the most likable and the closest one of you to me in the Hereafter is the one who have good morals.”* (Ibn Hibban, II, 231)

Islamic morals are certainly what make the believers achieve perfection in both worlds. Islamic ethics was arisen from the system of the universal principles of the Qur’an; then was formed by the traditions of the Prophet, and took its most perfect shape in the paradigm of the Messenger of Allah. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), who was a monument of good morals, was disciplined by Allah the Almighty. Thus, he received the principles of ethics, which he taught to his followers, directly from Allah the Almighty through revelation. Sa’d b. Hisham b. ‘Amir said to Aisha (may Allah be pleased with both of them):

“O Mother of the Faithful, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).”

She asked:

“Don’t you read the Qur’an?” I replied:

“Yes, I do.” Upon this she said:

“The character of the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) was the Qur’an.” (Muslim, Musafirin, 139)

The famous Turkish poet Ziya Pasha expresses this in his following lines:

He attended to such a school



In which Allah was his teacher

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) summoned in himself all the characteristics praised in the Qur'an and became the excellent exemplar for all of humanity. The most obvious aspect of his character was his unique good morals. This is why Allah the Almighty praised him in the Qur'an saying:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

“And lo! You are of a tremendous nature.” (al-Qalam 68; 4) The Prophet (pbuh), too, emphasized the significance of good morals by mentioning that one of the objects of his prophethood was to perfect the good morals as follows: *“I was sent to perfect good morals.”* (Muwatta, Husn al-Khuluq, 8)

In another saying, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stated the significance of good morals while looking at his reflection in front of a mirror and praying as follows:

“O Allah! Make my morals (khulq) perfect just like You have made my creation (khalq) perfect.”

“O Lord! Help me to achieve the most perfect morals. Indeed You are the only One who can help me to achieve that.” (Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari, X, 456)

Aziz Mahmud Hudayi (q.s.) states in the following lines how Allah the Almighty's attributes were reflected onto the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in the form of good morals and physical beauty as follows:

Âyinedir bu âlem herşey Hak ile kâim

Mir'ât-ı Muhammed'den Allâh görünür dâim.

“This universe is a mirror and the shadow images in it exist only because of the Truth. Manifestations of Allah the Almighty are always seen from the mirror of Muhammad.”

When we consider the two major subjects of the verses revealed during the Meccan period, i.e. faith and ethics, we can understand how much importance the Qur'an gives to good morals. Faith constitutes the basis of the connection with Allah the Almighty; while ethics makes up the essence of a servant's relationship with his/her society. Because Allah's Messenger (pbuh)





was the most excellent exemplar not just in matters of faith but also in ethics, Islam conquered the hearts of many in such a short time.

If we would like to see how the Prophet's morals were in general, the reports of Husain (r.a.), the Prophet's grandson, and Hind b. Abu Hala, the Prophet's stepson, nicely summarize them. Once Husain (r.a.) asked his father Ali (r.a.) how the Messenger of Allah would act outside his home, Ali (r.a.) gave the following answer:

"Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would not speak much. However when he spoke, his words were benefiting to the believers, getting them closer to each other, and solving the problems of division among them. He would help the dignified members of the tribes and appoint them as the leaders of their tribes.

He would never withhold his smile and good morals from anybody. He would ask for his companions whom he had not seen for a while and check their states. He praised and encouraged the good; while he decried and forbade the evil. All his acts were conscious, wise, and in place. He would neither overdo nor refrain from performing the right acts. He had the best of the people around him. For him the most superior of his companions was the one who had the best morals. And their highest one in degree was the one who helped the needy the most."

Then, Husain (r.a.) asked his father Ali (r.a.) about our Prophet's behavior in an assembly. Ali (r.a.) said that:

"Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would always remember Allah when he was sitting or standing. He would not reserve a special place for himself in the assembly and he would enjoin others to do the same. When he attended to a congregation, he would never sit at the head of the congregation but he would sit at the end of it and advise his companions to do the same. He would compliment everybody in the assembly such that everybody would think that he was the most favorable one in the eyes of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). When a needy person came to him for his needs, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would endure his entire burden until he left. When someone asked for something from him, he would not refuse him/her. If he had the means, he would help; and if he did not, he would at least talk nicely. His tolerance was so vast that it encompassed all of humanity. His morals were so mature that they became examples for all of humanity. He became like a benign father to everybody. In respect to justice everybody was equal in his eyes.



The Prophet's congregations were assemblies of knowledge, modesty, patience, and trust. In his assemblies nobody would raise their voice, nor would anybody be accused of wrongdoings. No one's misconduct or flaw would be revealed to the public. Everybody in his congregation was equal and piety was the only measure of superiority among them. All members of his congregation were humble people. They showed respect to the elders and treated the youngsters with compassion and mercy. They would primarily deal with the needy and try to take care of their needs. They would protect the foreigners and lonely people." Ali (r.a.) continued his words about the Prophet's behavior in an assembly as follows:

"Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would always treat the members of his congregation graciously and leniently. His mercy and forgiveness was abundant. He would never quarrel with anybody. He would always act calmly and with dignity and say nice words. He was a very generous and altruistic person. He abstained from three things:

- Quarreling with others
- Speaking too much
- And dealing with useless and vain acts.

He would refrain from three things about people:

- He would never reproach anybody neither to his face nor in his absence
- He would never look for anyone's faults and flaws
- He would never say a useless word to anybody.

When Allah's Messenger was talking in an assembly, everybody in the congregation would stand still like they had birds on their heads. They would talk, only after he finished his words, however, they would never dispute before the Prophet (pbuh). If someone spoke before the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), everybody else in the congregation would stay quiet until he finished his words.

When people in his congregation laughed or were surprised at something, he would laugh and be surprised with them.⁶⁰ He would endure the harsh and

60. What is emphasized here is that the Prophet (pbuh) would pay attention to the interests





rude demands of the foreigners, even though his companions could not stand and interfere with the situation. He would advise: *“Help those who present their needs to you.”*

He would not approve false praises. He would not interrupt anybody’s words unless they violated someone’s rights. When someone violated other people’s rights, he would either stop him from this or stand up and leave the assembly.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 423-25)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would abstain from saying “no” at the utmost level. In other words, he does not have “لا or no” in his vocabulary. When something which he approved was asked from him, he would say “okay”; if something that he did not approve was asked, he would just keep his silence, and his reluctance could be understood from his silence. (Haythami, IX, 13)

The Prophet’s stepson, Hind b. Abu Hala, talks about the Messenger of Allah in response to Hasan’s (r.a.) question as follows:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would turn his entire body to the direction at which he wanted to look. He would not look around haphazardly. He would usually look in front of him. His look was of contemplation and exemplary. He would have his companions walk in front of him; and he would walk behind them. When he met someone, he would be the first one to greet. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was usually sad and thoughtful. He would not speak in vain. His silence was long. He would speak clearly and fluently from the beginning to the end. He would use concise and succinct words in his speech. He would neither say less nor more.

His talk was very soft and intelligible; it would neither hurt nor humiliate anybody. He would show respect and would never despise even the smallest blessings from Allah the Almighty. He would neither praise nor criticize anything just for his own pleasure. He would not get angry for anything or any deed of this world; but, when a person’s right was violated, then he would not be calm until he fixed the violation. He would never get angry for personal

and inclinations of his congregation and would not exclude anybody from it. He would abstain from deeds which might have lead people to think that he was different than other people. He would maintain his spiritual and heartfelt relationship with others. He was very careful about establishing good relations with people except in obligatory or prohibited matters. His sensitivity in such matters has been followed by the friends of Allah. In this respect, the late Musa Topbaş (q.s.) said that “Mildness with people is a higher station than contentment.”



reasons, and would always forgive. His anger would pass easily, and besides he would never show his anger. When he was happy or relaxed, he would close his eyes. His laugh was usually in the form of a smile. When he smiled, his teeth looked like the pieces of pearls.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 422-23) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was the nicest, most polite, and most smiling human being. (Ibn Sa’d, I, 365)

Even before his prophethood, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had been praised by his tribe for his good morals. This is stated in the historical sources as follows:

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was the most superior one of his tribe in courage and kindness, the best one in morals, the most honorable one in ancestry, the most sensitive one in observing his neighbors’ rights, the gentlest, the most truthful, the most trustworthy, and the most careful one not to hurt anybody. It was never seen that he criticized or reproached someone; nor was he seen quarrelling with anybody. He had such excellent virtues that he was called by his tribe as “the trustworthy one.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 121)

The Prophet (pbuh) said that: *“There exist no wisdom like precaution, no abstention like being chaste, and no honor and greatness like good morals.”* (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 24) Thus, he depicted good morals as the best merit that could adorn a person.

If moral characteristics are used properly, they get praised by everybody. Otherwise, they might end up with unwanted results. This is why Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did everything properly. He never showed an ill-timed bravery. If forgiveness was not appropriate, then he did not forgive; or when it was not necessary, he did not show mercy. The Prophet’s actions and behaviors are measures for all of humanity. By means of his exemplary behaviors and actions, limits of ethics were drawn and no ethical measure went beyond its limits.

After this general overview about the Prophet’s ethical sensitivity, let’s have a look at his virtues individually, and let’s examine his sayings which are a guide for humanity.





A. His Modesty

Mazhar-ı feyz olamaz düşmeyince hâke nebât Mütevazî olanı rahmet-i Rahmân büyüdür.⁶¹

Modesty means obedience and submission to Allah and acceptance of the truth. Shortness in modesty is a sign of arrogance while its exaggeration means abasement. Excessive modesty may manifest itself as a sign of arrogance of the inner self. This is why one should be very careful about keeping the balance in this respect.

According to Hasan al-Basri, modesty means that when a believer leaves his home, he/she is to consider every Muslim on his/her path superior than him/her. The great Sufi Fudail b. Iyad's following words during circumambulation of the Ka'bah to the pious hadith scholar Shuaib b. Harb reflects a similar thinking:

“O Shuaib! If you think that a pilgrim more sinner than you and me came for this year's pilgrimage, this is an awful presumption.

Modesty is the most important ornament, which embellishes human beings in this life. This virtue is a requirement of being a servant of Allah. A human being, who has nothing and who presents all his/her needs to the Lord the Independent (al-Ghani), is not expected to think or behave otherwise. This would be an act contrary to the truth; because, vanity, selfishness, and bragging are curtains set between a human being and the objects (the world). Without lifting these curtains it is impossible to see things as they really are. This world in conceited people's minds has an utterly different view than its reality. Those who cannot get rid of such delusions and see the reality of the events are drifted into mistakes, deceive themselves more than anybody else, and, worst of all, are subject to Divine anger and displeasure. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“Whoever shows one degree modesty for the sake of Allah the Almighty, Allah will raise him one degree for that. And whoever shows one degree of pride, Allah will degrade him one degree because of that and consequently will throw him/her to the level of the lowest of the lows (asfal-i safilin).” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 16)

61. A seed cannot grow and germinate unless it falls to the earth. This is why Allah the Almighty's mercy lets (not the arrogant but) the modest ones grow and exalt.



Another prophetic tradition that expresses how severely wrong vanity is as follows:

“It is narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr (r.a.) that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stated:

“Three are the persons with whom Allah would neither speak on the Day of Resurrection, nor would look at them nor would absolve them and there is a painful chastisement for them.”

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) repeated this sentence three times. Abu Dharr (r.a.) remarked:

“They failed and they lost; who are these persons, O Messenger of Allah?” Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) replied:

“They are: the one who drags his lower garment, the one who rubs his/her favor in, and the one who tries to sell his/her goods by false oath.” (Muslim, Iman, 171)

As it can be understood from this tradition, pride is such a bad attribute that will entitle its owner to Divine punishment by depriving him/her of Allah’s words, look, and purification in the Hereafter. Such people not only go astray but also are obnoxious in the eyes of the others. Modesty, on the other hand, gets people accustomed to truth. It also deepens and elevates them spiritually. An intellectual states that: “There is a window called “rank” which everybody in society will see and be seen from. Those who are short walk in arrogance in order to see themselves; while those who are great have to bow in humility. The measure for the greatness is humility; and the measure for humility is showing arrogance.”

All people instinctively love the modest ones; because like everything else love flows from higher grounds to lower ones. Hence, modesty or showing oneself lower than the others attracts everyone’s love.

Allah the Almighty commands humility first to his most beloved servant, the Prophet (pbuh), in the following verses:

“And lower your wing (in kindness) unto those believers who follow you.” (al-Shuara 26; 215) When the Prophet (pbuh) got this order, he said that *“Allah the Almighty ordered me to be so humble that no one would boast towards others and no one would oppress others.”* (Muslim, Jannah, 64) Then, he





lived the peak of humbleness and manifested endless examples for his ummah. He considered being a servant of Allah more honorable and did not incline to be a king or a ruler. A report which states the Prophet's choice in this matter is as follows:

"One day Allah's Messenger was sitting and chatting with Angel Gabriel. Just then an angel came down from the heavens. Gabriel said that this was the first time that this angel was coming down to earth. The angel said:

"O Muhammad! I was sent to you by your Lord. He wants to know which one you would prefer being a king prophet or a servant prophet." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) looked at Gabriel. Gabriel signaled him to be humble and said: "O Messenger of Allah! Be modest towards your Lord." Then the Prophet told the angel: *"I would prefer to be a servant prophet."* (Ibn Hanbal, II, 231; Haythami, IX, 18, 20) After the Prophet's humble choice, being a servant has become the most honorable rank at which a human being can reach.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) warned those who had shown him excessive respect saying: *"Do not raise me above the degree that is proper for me; because Allah the Almighty has chosen me as His servant before he chose me as His Messenger."* (Hakim, III, 197/4825; Haythami, IX, 21) Thus, he emphasized the significance of being a servant.

Abdullah b. Jubair (r.a.) narrates:

"One day while the Prophet (pbuh) was walking with a group of companions, one of them wanted to protect Allah's Messenger (pbuh) from the sunlight by means of a cover. When the Prophet (pbuh) saw the shadow above him, he raised his head and saw that a companion was the source of the shadow. He told the companion:

"Leave it." Then he took the cover down and said: *"I am just a human being like you are."* (Haythami, IX, 21)

Even though Allah's Apostle was the most beloved servant of Allah the Almighty and the most esteemed human being, he showed the utmost modesty with which no other human could show and lived like a regular member of the Muslim community. Abbas (r.a.) narrates:

"I told the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):



“O Messenger of Allah! Why don’t you have a throne for yourself and sit on it? I see that people are disturbing you.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) replied:

“No! I will stay among the people until Allah takes me to His presence. Let them step on my foot, pull my clothes, and let the dust raised by them bother me.” (Ibn Sa’d, II, 193; Haythami, IX, 21)

Because of his boundless modesty, our Prophet (pbuh) neither stayed behind closed doors nor hid behind curtains nor did he accept that his food to be brought before him. He would sit and eat his food on the ground and say: *“I sit like a servant sits, and eat just like a servant eats. I am just a servant of Allah.”* (Ibn Sa’d, I, 372) Even when slaves invited him to eat barley bread, he would accept their invitation. (Haythami, IX, 20) He would even greet children. (Bukhari, Isti’zan, 15) How significant is the following report in this respect:

“When any man from Medina, even a slave, held the hand of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he would take him to the place where he wanted to go, listen to his needs and solve his problems. (Bukhari, Adab, 61) Abdullah b. Wassaf expresses in his following lines that those who are compassionate towards others will in fact ascend:

Her âcize şefkat et şefî ol
Mahlûka tevâzû et refî ol.

*“Show compassion to all destitute and be an intercessor
Be modest towards creation and be exalted”*

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) was so modest that he asked his companions to pray for him even though he was bestowed with endless Divine blessings and his exalted state in the presence of Allah the Almighty was well-known. It was narrated by Umar b. al-Khattab (r.a.):

“I sought permission of the Prophet (pbuh) to perform minor pilgrimage. He gave me his permission and said:

“My brother, do not forget me in your supplication.”

Umar (r.a) said:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told me a word that pleased me so much that I would not have been pleased if I were given the whole world.” (Abu Dawud, Witr, 23)





When the Prophet (pbuh) was at home, he would repair the rips in his clothes, mend his shoes, (Ibn Sa'd, I, 366) and milk his sheep. (Haythami, IX, 20) He would carry his own luggage and would not like to be a burden to anybody. The following incident narrated by Abu Hurairah (r.a.) is an excellent example of this:

"...One day I went to the market along with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He bought some clothes. I wanted to take and carry them for him. Upon this he told me:

"It is more appropriate for a person to carry his own things unless he was too weak to carry them. Then his Muslim brother may help him." (Haythami, V, 122)

According to Anas' (r.a.) report, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would visit the sick, attend funerals, and would not be ashamed to use the rides which anyone owned as rides. For instance, he would not be ashamed to ride a donkey. In fact he used a donkey as a ride during the days of the conquest of Khaibar and during the military campaign to the sons of Kuraizah. Many times he had no ride and he walked, and this was a very normal situation for him. Jabir (r.a.) says in this respect:

"Once I fell ill. The Prophet and Abu Bakr walked a long way to pay me a visit without a ride." (Bukhari, Marda, 15)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh), who carried rocks like everybody else during the construction of his mosque, tied two stones over his belly while his companions tied one stone to their bellies because of hunger during digging the trenches,⁶² lived his life no different than the lives of his companions. He would not see himself superior than his companions. Abdullah b. Busr (r.a.) narrates the following incident in this regard:

"The Prophet (pbuh) had a bowl called *gharra* which could be carried by four people. When the sun rose high, and they performed the forenoon prayer, the bowl in which *tharid* was prepared was brought. And the companions gathered around it. When they were numerous, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) kneeled down and sat on his knees. A bedouin saw this modest sitting style and asked in amazement:

62. Ibn Hanbal, II, 381; Bukhari, Riqaq, 17



“What kind of sitting is this?” The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Allah has made me a respectable servant and He did not make me an obstinate tyrant.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 17)

In the following lines, Fuzuli elegantly describes through a metaphor how the greatness of the Prophet (pbuh) can never be lost by behaving like a regular servant:

Saâdet-i ezeli kâbil-i zevâl olmaz
Güneş yer üstüne düşmekle pâymâl olmaz.

“Eternal happiness is not possible to be lost; The sun would not be wretched by falling to the ground.”

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not like being seen and treated differently than his friends. He ordered a sheep to be slaughtered and cooked during an expedition. One of his companions said: “O Messenger of Allah! Let me slaughter it.” Another companion said: “O Messenger of Allah! Let the skinning be my work.” And another one said: “O Messenger of Allah! Let the cooking be my work.” The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Then collecting firewood will be my job.” Even though companions objected saying: “O Messenger of Allah! You do not need to work. We can do that, too” the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“I know you can do my work, too. However, I do not like to be in a position more privileged than you are. Because Allah the Almighty does not like His servant to be in a state more privileged among his friends.” (Qastallani, I, 385)

Even though our Prophet (pbuh) was both the head of the state and the commander of the army, he manifested unique humility. When his efforts and determination were combined with the help of Allah the Almighty, great conquests were bestowed upon the Prophet (pbuh). However, none of these affected his modesty. His entrance to Mecca after the conquest is one of the best manifestations of his modesty. The companions who were there with him depicted this scene as follows:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was commanding the army that was on its way to conquer Mecca. After the victory was bestowed, he was entering the



city on his camel. He had bowed his head so much that his beard was almost touching the saddle of his camel. Just then he was continuously uttering,

اللَّهُمَّ لَا عَيْشَ إِلَّا عَيْشُ الْآخِرَةِ

“O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter...”

(Waqidi, II, 824; Bukhari, Riqaq, 1)⁶³

Despite all these conquests, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) never stopped being a modest person. For instance, when one of his companions was riding a camel, he would walk next to him like a simple person.

One day Allah’s Apostle (pbuh), together with some men from *Ansar* and *Muhajirun*, was bidding farewell to Muadh b. Jabal, who was leaving to be the Governor of Yemen. Muadh (r.a.) was riding a camel, while the Prophet (pbuh) was walking next to him and giving him some advice. Muadh (r.a.) expressed his shyness saying:

“O Messenger of Allah! I am on a ride, whereas you are walking. Would you mind if I walk with you and your friends?” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) appeased him and explained what the real issue was saying:

“O Muadh! I would like these steps of mine to be the steps on the path of Allah the Almighty.” (Diyarbakri, II, 142)

Again the Prophet (pbuh) would stay behind on his journeys so that he could get those who had difficulty walking on the back of his ride and he would pray for them. (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 94)

In the essence of such modesty, exists the state of not attributing any value to this world and anything in it. The real life in the eyes of the Messenger of Allah was the life of the Hereafter and those who compete should compete to gain that life.

63. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) often repeated these words which express the significance of the afterlife compared to the life in this world. According to the reports, during the construction of his mosque in Medina, during the digging of the trenches, on the day of the conquest when entering Mecca, and during the farewell pilgrimage when he saw the great number of believers, he uttered these words. (Bukhari, Jihad, 33, 110; Manaqib al-Ansar, 9; Maghazi, 29; Muslim, Jihad, 126, 129; Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 55; Ibn Majah, Masajid, 3)

All of the examples in the above mentioned traditions are some of the reflections of his unique modesty. Whereas, he (pbuh) was in a state much higher than we could explain; because modesty was his characteristic. His ummah's duty is to follow his footsteps and walk on the path of enlightenment. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) nicely explains this reality as follows:

A priest, who had come to Konya to see Rumi, ran across him while walking with the people in his company. He bowed down to express his respect before Rumi. Rumi responded to him similarly. When the priest raised his head, he saw that Rumi (q.s.), too, was bowing down. The priest was impressed by Rumi's behavior so much that he converted to Islam. After Rumi returned to his home, he told his son Sultan Walad the amazing words below:

"A priest wanted to take the merit of modesty from us. Thanks to Allah we defeated him on this path, for modesty and gentleness are the characteristics of those who follow the master of the worlds (pbuh)." (Ali Nihat Tarlan, p. 28)

B. His *Haya* or Shyness

**Hazret-i Hak'tan edip istihyâ
Meh-i nev gibi olurlardı dü-tâ⁶⁴**

Hakani

The Arabic word *haya* means rescission, bashfulness, self respect, modesty, and to be scruple which occurs as a result of something that one should be ashamed of.

There are two different kinds of *haya*. One of them is natural, which has been given to humanity by Allah the Almighty, like the shyness felt from showing the privy parts of the body to others. The other one is gained by discipline and training which withholds the believer from committing sins. According to this description, *haya* refers to staying away from bad and ugly deeds, being moderate in actions and behaviors, and not overstepping the limits. The following narration of Ibn Mas'ud (r.a.) explains this kind of *haya*:

"One day our Prophet (pbuh) ordered us:

"Be duly bashful towards Allah the Almighty." Upon this we said:

64. Because of his bashfulness towards Allah the Almighty, the Prophet (pbuh) would stand bent over like a crescent.





“O Messenger of Allah! We are bashful towards Allah.” Then Allah’s Messenger made the following explanation:

“What I mean is not the kind of bashfulness you think. Being properly shy towards Allah means to control the head, the body and all the other limbs on them and to remember death and decomposition under the earth. Those who want the Hereafter should leave the embellishments of this world and prefer the Hereafter over this life. Whoever acts in accordance with what I just said will be duly shy towards Allah.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 24)

There are many degrees of shyness. The highest one is to feel inwardly and outwardly shy towards Allah. In other words, it means the continuous awareness of being in the presence of Allah the Almighty.

Haya or shyness is such a human feeling that prevents one from doing bad deeds and doing anything he/she wants. Also, it is an indispensable part of religious piety. Therefore, a believing servant cannot be pious unless he/she has *haya*.

Haya has a close connection with faith. They always exist together. In fact the Prophet (pbuh) said that *“Haya is a part of faith.”* (Bukhari, Iman, 3) When one of them disappears, the other one goes away, too. (Hakim, I, 73) Incompleteness of *haya* and good manners emanates from defectiveness of faith and religiosity.

Allah the Almighty loves His modest and shy servants and praises them in the Qur’an as follows:

“(Charity is) for those in need who, in Allah’s cause are restricted (from travel), and cannot move about in the land, seeking (for trade or work): the ignorant man thinks, because of their abstaining (from begging), that they are free from want. You can know them by their (unfailing) mark: they do not beg men importunately. And whatever of good you give, be assured Allah knows it well.” (al-Baqarah 2; 273)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) emphasized that Allah the Almighty loves modest people in his following words to Ashaj al-Asari (r.a.): *“Verily you have two characteristics that Allah loves them: forbearance (hilm) and modesty (haya).”* (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 18)



While those who do not have *haya* and want the diffusion of immodesty have been warned by Allah the Almighty as follows:

“Those who love (to see) scandal published broadcast among the Believers, will have a grievous Penalty in this life and in the Hereafter: Allah knows, and you know not.” (al-Nur 24; 19)

Those who would like to spread immodesty in their society show the greatest disrespect towards their society. Such people will suffer the greatest loss, because, as it was stated by the Prophet (pbuh), immodesty is one of the reasons of destruction:

“Certainly when Allah the Almighty wants to destroy a servant, He snatches haya off him/her. When Allah takes haya off, the servant becomes one of those who deserve Divine wrath. When the servant is punished by Divine wrath, trustworthiness gets removed from him/her. When he/she loses his/her trustworthiness, then he/she becomes a betrayer. When he/she becomes a betrayer, mercy gets removed from him/her. When mercy gets removed, he/she becomes cursed. When he/she gets cursed, then his/her ties with Islam will be broken off.” (Ibn majah, Fitān, 27)

The real object of all Prophets' mission was to make monotheism dominant in the world and establish a society with good morals. Of course Allah's Messenger (pbuh), who was in charge with teaching the principles of ethics and presenting the best examples of good morals to humanity, was the best one among people in this regard. Before his prophethood, even in a period when immorality invaded all of humanity, he was distinguished by his good morality. One of the best examples of this reality is as follows:

“When the Ka'bah was rebuilt, the Prophet (pbuh) and his uncle Abbas (r.a.) were lifting the stones for its construction. Abbas (r.a.) said to the Prophet (pbuh), “Take off your waist sheet and put it on your shoulder (so that the stones will not hurt your shoulders).” When the Prophet wanted to put it on his shoulder, he fell on the ground with his eyes open towards the sky and said, “Give me my waist sheet.” And he covered himself with it.” (Bukhari, Hajj, 42)

Even though walking around naked was accepted very normal in that society, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) never acted outside the limits of modesty. As it was stated in the tradition, even when he faced such a problem as a result of his uncle's suggestion, he was protected by Allah the Almighty.



About our Prophet's bashfulness Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (r.a.) says that:

"The Prophet was shyer than a veiled virgin girl who reached her years of puberty. When he saw a thing he disliked, we knew it from his face." (Bukhari, Manaqib, 23)

Again our Prophet (pbuh) asked his ummah to adorn their behaviors with shyness saying that:

"Shyness does not bring anything except goodness." (Bukhari, Adab, 77)

"All of modesty is goodness." (Muslim, Iman, 61) He (pbuh) also stated that deeds would be tarnished by immodesty and would not be welcomed; while deeds adorned with shyness would be approved by everybody. (Tirmidhi, Birr, 47)

Shyness is a virtue, which gives human beings complete goodness; it does not matter from what reason it stems out from. This sublime feeling has nothing to do with negative attributes, such as unsociability, lack of self-respect, cowardice, and ineptness. As a matter of fact, female members of Ansar used to come to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and would ask him the most intimate questions. Aisha (r.a.) said that: "...How good are the women of Ansar (helpers) that their shyness does not prevent them from learning the religious matters thoroughly." (Muslim, Hayd, 61)

In the following verses, Allah the Almighty points out the shyness of His Messenger (pbuh):

"O you who believe! Enter not the dwellings of the Prophet for a meal without waiting for the proper time, unless permission be granted you. But if you are invited, enter, and, when your meal is ended, then disperse. Linger not for conversation."

إِنَّ ذَلِكُمْ كَانَ يُؤْذِي النَّبِيَّ فَيَسْتَحْيِي مِنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ

"Lo! That would cause annoyance to the Prophet, and he would be shy of (asking) you (to go); but Allah is not shy of the truth..." (al-Ahzab 33; 53)

The reason for the revelation of the above mentioned verses was narrated by Anas bin Malik:

“When Allah’s Apostle married Zainab bint Jahsh, my mother Ummu Sulaim told me:

“Let’s give Allah’s Messenger a wedding gift.” I told her:

“Then prepare something and I will take it to him.” Upon this she brought some dates, oil, and skim milk cheese. She mixed them in a pot and prepared a meal; then she sent it with me. When I took it to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), he ordered me:

“Leave it there and call for me so and so” by giving me the names of the people he was inviting. He then added: *“call everybody you run across on your way.”* I fulfilled his order and then went back. The Prophet’s house was filled with people. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) put his hand over the meal and said something which only Allah knew (or he said something quietly). Then he invited his guest ten by ten. Everybody was eating from the meal. Allah’s Messenger told his guests:

“Begin eating your meal by saying the name of Allah and eat in front of you.” This state continued until everybody finished eating and left. But some of them took the meal and remained sitting and talking. Then the Prophet showed them that he was ready to get up, yet they did not get up. When he noticed that there was no response to his movement, he got up, and the others too, got up except three persons who kept on sitting. The Prophet came back in order to enter his room, but he went away again. Then they left, whereupon I set out and went to the Prophet to tell him that they had departed, so he came and entered his house. I wanted to enter along with him, but he put a screen between me and him. Then Allah revealed those verses.” (Bukhari, Tafsir, 33; Muslim, Nikah, 89)

Because of his shyness, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) could not even say anything to those who had thoughtlessly sat in his home on the day of his marriage and waited for them to leave on their own. However, Allah the Almighty did not like His Messenger to be disturbed and immediately revealed those verses to warn the believers.

The incident below, which occurred after the siege of Taif that shows the Prophet’s (pbuh) level of shyness, is worth mentioning.

A companion named Sakhr, who had some military successes together with his cavalry, took some captives, and he asked the Prophet (pbuh) for a





water source, which had belonged to an enemy tribe called Sulaimis. Then he and his tribe settled around the water source. A while later Mughirah b. Shubah, who had a relative among the captives, came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Sakhr took my paternal aunt captive, whereas she had embraced Islam like other Muslims.” The Prophet (pbuh) called him and said:

“O Sakhr, when people embrace Islam, they have security of their blood and property. Give back to Mughirah his paternal aunt.” So he returned his aunt to him. Later the Sulaimis converted to Islam and asked Sakhr to give back their water source. He refused their request and so they came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said:

“O Prophet of Allah, we embraced Islam and came to Sakhr so that he might return our water to us. But he has refused.

The Prophet (pbuh) then called Sakhr again and ordered him:

“When people embrace Islam, they secure their properties and blood. Return to the people their water.”

He said: “Yes, O Messenger of Allah” and obeyed the Prophet’s command.

The companion who narrated this incident stated that the face of the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) was reddening like the face of a virgin at that moment, being ashamed of taking back what he had given to Sakhr.” (Abu Dawud, Haraj, 34-36)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) could not look at someone’s face directly and carefully because of his bashfulness. (Munawi, V, 224)

Our Prophet (pbuh) always lived in goodness. He did not act outside the limits of shyness even when he was alone. He asked his companions to do the same and ordered them to be sensitive about the principles of covering. He (pbuh) advised his followers to be modest and bashful both in public and alone saying: *“Allah is characterized by modesty and concealment. So when any of you washes, he should conceal himself.”* (Abu Dawud, Hammam, 1) In another prophetic saying, it was stated that:



“Abstain from nakedness. There are angels that are with you all the time. They leave you alone only when you go to relieve yourselves and when you are having intercourse with your wives. Feel ashamed from them and do good to them.” (Tirmidhi, Adab, 42) As it can be clearly seen in these narrations Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), who always lived knowing that he was in the presence of Allah the Almighty, felt shyness towards Him and lived every moment of his life in good manners. He also advised his ummah to be constantly bashful. One day the Prophet (pbuh) saw a man washing in a public place without a lower garment. So he mounted the pulpit, praised and extolled Allah and said:

“Allah is characterized by modesty and concealment. So when any of you washes himself (ghusl), he should conceal himself.” (Abu Dawud, Hammam, 1)

The spiritual point that Islam aims for is to get its followers to be aware that they are always in the presence of Allah. Feeling *haya* towards Allah is a natural result of this awareness. When a person knows that Allah the Almighty sees him/her all the time, he/she lives in accordance with the principles of manners and *haya*. Because he/she acts carefully, he/she does not make any mistakes; and this is the highest point of *haya*.

The feeling of shame has existed since the first human being. Furthermore, the significance of this feeling has been expressed since the first prophet and the divine orders in this regard have not been changed since. This is stated by the Messenger of Allah as follows:

“One of the sayings of the early Prophets which the people have got is: If you don’t feel ashamed do whatever you like.” (Bukhari, Anbiya, 54; Adab, 78)

This principle, which has come down from generation after generation until this day, keeps people away from committing sins and bad deeds. It is impossible for a person who feels shy towards Allah and other people to do every deed which pleases his/her self; while there is no obstacle between those who do not have the feeling of shyness and act however they want. Therefore, such a person can easily commit all kinds of sins.

One day people will be questioned for their actions no matter what they have done. This is why everybody should carefully think about his/her next step. They can perform everything with a peace of mind, if it is something that does not require being ashamed of from Allah and from other people. However, if it is something to be ashamed of then he/she should immediately





abandon it. In the above mentioned saying, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) presents us a measure for our behaviors. In short, following the Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) is the most certain and shortest path; because he is a matchless guide for our lives as being a paradigm of shyness.

C. His Adherence to His Promises

“... Fulfill your (part of the) covenant, I shall fulfill My (part of the) covenant...”

(Baqarah, 2; 40)

Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an: **“O you who believe! Fulfill the obligations...”** (al-Maidah 5; 1). Therefore, believers must observe their promises. First of all, faith is a type of promise or an agreement. It means that a believer makes promises to Allah the Almighty. In addition, personal and social promises are also made. No matter what kind of promise we have made, we need to keep our promises; because it is the essence of our religion, rule of our faith, and order of Allah the Almighty.

Adherence to our promises occupies a very important place in the foundation and continuance of the social order; because, improvement of personal and social life depends on mutual relationships, and these relationships are based upon various agreements and promises. Without agreements social and economic growth cannot continue. The significant amount of complaints and setbacks in affairs are the result of breaking promises. It is a vested right to expect the fulfillment of agreements. In other words, those who do not keep their promises violate others rights and do not fulfill their obligations at the same time. Allah the Almighty invites His servants to be careful in this regard saying:

“...and fulfill the promise; surely (every) promise shall be questioned about.” (al-Isra 17; 34) As internalizing this good moral is to the advantage of a servant, not fulfilling its requirements is to his/her disadvantage. While distrust, anger, and enmity will prevail around those who are not observant of their promises; tranquility and peace will emerge in places where obligations are fulfilled. As a result, people will become more attached to each other with love and respect. Allah the Almighty states that He will bestow great blessings upon such observant people in the following verse:



“...So whosoever breaks his oath breaks it only to his soul’s hurt; while whosoever keeps his covenant with Allah, on him will He bestow immense reward.” (al-Fath 48; 10)

It is narrated by Abu Huraira:

“The Prophet said that *“Allah says, ‘I will be against three persons on the Day of Resurrection’”* and then He counts the first one which is who makes a covenant in His Name, but he proves to be treacherous. (Bukhari, Buyu’ 106) In another tradition, the Prophet (pbuh) expresses that if a believer breaks his/her promises, he/she will have an attribute of hypocrisy until he/she gives it up. (Bukhari, Iman, 24)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) describes the tragic end of such people on the Day of Judgment in his following saying:

“...On the Day of Judgment there will be a flag for every person guilty of the breach of faith. It will be raised in proportion to the extent of his guilt ...” (Muslim, Jihad, 15) In other words, a distrustful person will be exposed on the Day of Judgment in front of other people and will distinguished by raising a flag. This will make him/her more disgraced and ashamed.

Abdullah b. Abbas said that “there is no people who betray a pledge, but that Allah gives their enemies power over them.” (*Muwatta*, Jihad, 4) Thus, he pointed out that those who do not keep their promises will be liked by neither Allah the Almighty nor His servants and will face many troubles.

In many places of the Qur’an, our Lord expresses that He is observant of His promises and His promise will never change in His presence. After Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had performed the funeral prayer of one of his companions, he made the following invocation and proclaimed that Allah the Almighty is faithful to His promises:

“O Allah! Son of so and so is in Your protection, so guard him from the trial in the grave and the punishment in Hell. You are faithful to Your promise and worthy of praise. O Allah! Forgive him and show him mercy. You are the forgiving and the merciful one.” (Abu Dawud, Janaiz, 54-56) The statement of *“being faithful to the promises”* in this prayer emphasizes that Allah the Almighty will fulfill His promises, reward the performer of good deeds, and always be with the truth and truthful. Since our Lord Almighty likes to see this attribute in His servants, He says:



“... and fulfill your (part of the) covenant, I shall fulfill My (part of the) covenant ...” (Baqarah, 2; 40) and commands them to fulfill their obligations. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), the most perfect servant of Allah the Almighty and the most observant of His commands, often touched the covenant of the servants with their Lords and asked for Allah’s forgiveness:

وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَأَنَا عَلَىٰ عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ

“...I am Your slave and I am abiding to Your covenant and promise as best as I can...” (Bukhari, Daawat, 16) Our blessed Prophet (pbuh) always observed his covenant with Allah, his Lord, and never broke his promises. As a person who knew all aspects of the Prophet’s life, Ibn Abbas (r.a.) said about the Messenger of Allah (pbuh): “when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) gave a promise, he would certainly fulfill it.” (Bukhari, Shahadat, 28)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was always fair and upright in his relationships with his business partners, his customers, and other people as well. Besides, being faithful to his promises was a distinguishing characteristic of his even before his prophethood. When he made a promise to someone, he kept it no matter what the circumstances were.

Abdullah b. Abul Hamsa’ (r.a.) narrates, “Before the Holy Prophet (pbuh) declared his prophethood, I had bought something from him. I was a bit short on cash and so I asked the Prophet to wait whilst I went and got some money from home. The Prophet agreed to wait there but when I went home I completely forgot about it. After three days when I suddenly remembered, I rushed to see the Prophet who was standing and waiting for me at the same place where he had promised me. He did not show any displeasure at seeing me, just advised,

“O young man! You have put me in a difficult situation as I have been waiting here for you for three days.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 82)

Allah’s Apostle’s reason for waiting was not to get his money back but was because of his faithfulness to his promises. He became so sensitive about keeping his promises that even his enemies benefited from his mercy. It has been reported on the authority of Hudhaifa b. al-Yaman who said:

“Nothing prevented me from being present at the Battle of Badr except this incident: I came out with my father Husail to participate in the Battle, but we were caught by the disbelievers of Quraish. They said:

“Do you intend to go to Muhammad?” We said:

“We do not intend to go to him, but we have other reasons for going back to Medina.”

So they took from us a covenant in the name of Allah that we would turn back to Medina and would not fight on the side of Muhammad (pbuh). So, we came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and related the incident to him. He said:

“Both of you go; we will fulfill the covenant that you made with them and seek Allah’s help against them.” (Muslim, Jihad, 98)

Another incident which shows how breaking a promise does not befit a Muslim happened during the Hudaibiyah Treaty. One of the conditions of the treaty was to return all the refugees coming from Mecca to Medina. Just when they were signing the treaty, Abu Jandal (r.a.), son of Suhail b. Amr, the representative of Quraish, came to the Prophet (pbuh) dragging the chains attached to his feet. Because Abu Jandal (r.a.) had converted to Islam, he had been tortured by the Meccan polytheists. He found a way and escaped from them and took refuge in Muslims. Suhail told them that his son was the first person to be returned according to the treaty and hit Abu Jandal’s face with the stick in his hand. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), who was sorrowfully watching what was going on, asked Suhail to leave Abu Jandal out off the deal. However the hard hearted polytheist did not accept the Prophet’s request. Abu Jandal (r.a.) begged and asked for help from the believers while he was handed to the polytheists. The believers could not stand his situation and began to weep. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) appeased Abu Jandal saying:

“O Abu Jandal! Be patient a little more. Ask for your reward from Allah the Almighty. Without a doubt Allah the Most High will soon create a solution and ease for the weak believers like you and others. We have signed a peace agreement with these people and made a covenant with them in the name of Allah. They promised us in the name of Allah, too. We cannot break our prom-





ise, for breaking promises is not appropriate for us.” (Ibn Hanbal, IV, 325; Ibn Hisham, III, 376)⁶⁵

What happened to Abu Jandal (r.a.) soon happened to another sincere believer named Abu Basir (r.a.). Polytheist asked him to be returned, too. Abu Basir (r.a.) killed Hunays, one of his two guardians on his way back, and made the other one run away. He took Hunays’ sword, clothes, and other belongings. He took them to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Take one fifth of these for yourself.” The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“If I took one fifth of these, it would mean that I broke our agreement with them. However your actions and what you do with the possessions of that man is completely your own concern.” (Waqidi, II, 626-27)

The following incident which happened to a shepherd named Yasar during the Battle of Khaibar also deserves our attention. According to the reports, Yasar, who earned his livelihood by grazing the herds of a leading Jewish man, really wanted to meet the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and one morning when he went out of the castle to graze his herd, he met Allah Messenger (pbuh). After a short conversation with the Prophet, Yasar converted to Islam. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) changed his name to Aslam. Then Aslam asked the Prophet (pbuh) about what he needed to do with his herd. The Prophet (pbuh) replied:

“Turn them back and then chase them off. They will surely go back to their owners.” Aslam took a hand full of pebbles and threw them at the sheep and shouted: “Go back to your owners. By Allah! From now on, I will never see you again.” The sheep went back to their castle, as if an unseen hand was directing them. And the shepherd, with the Muslim army, proceeded towards the castle to fight.⁶⁶ (Ibn Hisham, III, 397-98; Ibn Hajar, *al-Isabah*, I, 38-39)

65. The Prophet (pbuh) repeated his request to Suhail:
“Don’t do this. Give him to us.” But Suhail refused. Then Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) made another request:
“Then take him under your protection for me.” Suhail did not accept this request, either. When Mikraz and Huwaytup witnessed Prophet’s insistence, they said: “O Muhammad! For you, we accept to take him under our protection and we will not torture him. (Waqidi, II, 608; Balazuri, I, 220) So the Prophet (pbuh) felt relieved and went back.
66. Aslam, the new convert, was later martyred and his body was brought to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). While Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) with some companions was walking towards the body, he turned his face away. When companions asked why he had done that, he said: *“Right now he is with two of his angel brides.”* This companion had later



Thus, by sending the herd back instead of keeping them as war booty the Prophet (pbuh) assured that the shepherd fulfilled his obligation. Furthermore, this incident happened when the battle prolonged and believers were having a food shortage, which increases the significance of Prophet's attitude about faithfulness to promises.

Companions who observed the Prophet's sensitivity in this respect and personally lived with the awareness of it were also very careful about fulfilling their promises. Jabir b. 'Abdullah narrated:

"Once the Prophet (pbuh) said to me,

"If the almsgiving money of Bahrain comes, I will give you a certain amount of it." The Prophet had breathed his last breath before the money of Bahrain arrived. Later when the money of Bahrain finally arrived, Abu Bakr announced, "Whoever was promised or owed money by the Prophet should come to us." I went to Abu Bakr and said, "The Prophet promised me so and so." Abu Bakr (r.a.) gave me a handful of coins and when I counted them, they were five-hundred in number. Abu Bakr then said, "Take twice the amount you have taken besides." (Bukhari, Kafalah, 3)

Another nice example, which attracts Allah's contentment and is pointed out in the Divine Word, was presented by Anas (r.a.).

"My uncle Anas bin An-Nadr was absent from the Battle of Badr. This was bothering him very much. He said, "O Allah's Apostle! I was absent from the first battle you fought against the pagans. By Allah! If Allah gives me a chance to fight the pagans, no doubt Allah will see how bravely I will fight." So he was present at the Battle of Uhud. On the day of Uhud when the Muslims turned their backs and fled, he said, "O Allah! I apologize to You for what these (i.e. Prophet's companions) have done, and I denounce what these (i.e. the pagans) have done." Then he advanced and Sa'd b. Muadh met him. He said "O Sa'd bin Muadh ! What I wish for is Paradise. By the Lord of Ka'bah! I smell Paradise's aroma coming from the side of the Mountain of Uhud," Later on Sa'd said, "O Allah's Apostle! I cannot achieve or do what he (i.e. Anas bin An-Nadr) did. We found my uncle martyred. He had more than eighty wounds by swords and arrows on his body. His body was mutilated so badly that none

become the answer of the following riddle among Muslims: "Who went to Paradise directly without performing a single prayer?"



except his sister could recognize him by his fingers.” The following verse was revealed concerning him and other men of his sort: **“Among the Believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allah: of them some have completed their vow to the extreme (they fought and were martyred), and some still wait (their turn): but they have never changed (their determination) in the least.”** (al-Ahzab 33; 23)” (Bukhari, Jihad, 12)

The companions were very sensitive about their promises to Allah and His Messenger (pbuh) and they tried to fulfill it no matter what the circumstances were. Those who did not have enough strength to fulfill their promises manifested behaviors accordant with the saying: “(if I cannot fulfill it) at least I can die trying to do it.” Bara b. Ma’rur (r.a.) was one of them. Bara (r.a.), who was one of the twelve Medinan representatives present at the Aqaba Allegiance, had promised the Prophet (pbuh) that he was going to come to Mecca for pilgrimage the following year. However, he became sick before the pilgrimage season. He told his family:

“Because of my promise to Allah and His Messenger (pbuh), turn me towards the Ka’bah. Because, I promised him that I would come.” Thus he became the first one who turned to the Ka’bah both in his life time and after his death. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) with his companions visited Bara b. Ma’rur’s grave when he came back to Medina. Then he led Bara’s funeral prayer and said: *“O Allah! Forgive him. Show mercy to him and be pleased with him.”* (Ibn Abdilbar, I, 153; Ibn sa’d, III, 619-20)

Being observant of promises, which is one of the most important principles of Islamic ethics, was lived by the Messenger of Allah and manifested in his actions and sayings in its most perfect way. Holding on to this wonderful moral of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), mercy of the worlds, will be the most important step in realizing the peace and safety of the society. Happiness in this world and in the Hereafter depends on such principles.

D. His Contentment

Contentment or *Qana’ah* means to be content with what one owns. Being satisfied with less, sufficing with a minimum amount of material means, not coveting to what others possess, and being saved from the greed to earn more are the manifestations of contentment in human beings.

Allah the Almighty, the Creator of human beings, also guarantees their sustenance. By stating in the Qur'an **"There is no moving creature on earth but its sustenance depends on Allah ..."** (Hud 11; 6) Allah refers that His servants need not to worry in this regard. However, He has distributed His blessings differently among His servants and has given some more and some others less based on various Divine reasons. Those who have been given less in their share need to be content with it. They should not become greedy and turn to unlawful ways of earning livelihood. The rich, on the other hand, must be generous, stay away from greed and use their wealth to help those in need.

Contentment is not a characteristic particular to the poor. The affluent may sometimes need it more than the needy. Because the more one's wealth increases the more his/her greed strengthens. Even if people earn enough wealth to provide for all of their relatives, they would not be satisfied with it and would try to earn and hoard more. Their greed makes them see their wealth as only a little and cause them not to benefit properly from it. Yunus Emre states this attitude in his following lines:

Kem tamahlık eyleme – Do not get greedy

Akılın sana yar ise – If reason is your companion

Those who are not content, whether they are poor or affluent, will be seized by the lures of this world. They will forget to prepare for the Hereafter and become losers in both worlds. Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) gives the following advice to such people:

"If you pour the sea of blessings into a pitcher, how much will it hold? Only one day's blessings, one day's water... The pitcher, the eye of the covetous, never becomes full: the oyster-shell is not filled with pearls until it is contented." (Mathnawi, I, verses: 20-21)

The one who is not aware of the overflow and greedily tries to fill more water in his/her pitcher not only forgets the reason of his/her creation but also destroys himself/herself. Allah the Almighty points out the wrongfulness of such behavior in the verses below:

"I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me. No Sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me. For Allah is He Who gives (all) Sustenance, Lord of Power, Steadfast (forever)." (al-Zariyat 51; 56-58) This is why Allah's Messenger praised and ad-





vised contentment, one of the most important principles of Islam. He pointed out that wealth does not mean having a great amount of property, but the real wealth is self-contentment. (Bukhari, Riqaaq, 15) He also states that those who are confident about their inner selves and healthy and possess their daily sustenance have been given all the goodness of the world. (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 34) In another tradition, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

"He is successful who has accepted Islam, who has been provided with sufficient for his want and been made contented by Allah with what He has given him." (Muslim, Zakat, 125)

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) considered contentment as the highest degree of thankfulness and expressed that the content were the most thanking people. (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 24)

In another prophetic saying the characteristics of the thankful and patient believers are stated as follows:

"To look at and follow those who are above you in piety, and to look at those who are below you in worldly possessions and be thankful for what you have. Allah records such people as the thanking and the patient. Whoever looks at those below them in piety, while looking at those who are above them in wealth and get sad because of their poverty, Allah will not record them as the thanking and the patient." (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 58)

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that people will be questioned for their possessions. Allah the Almighty will ask His servants where and how they spent the wealth, which He had bestowed upon them. Hence the bigger the wealth is, the greater the responsibility it comes with. In this regard we observe the best measure in the following saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

"Abu Umama reported Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as saying:

"O son of Adam, it is better for you if you spend your surplus wealth, but if you withhold it, it is evil for you. There is, however, no reproach for you if you withhold means necessary for a living. And begin charity with your dependants; and the upper hand is better than the lower hand." (Muslim, Zakat, 97)

People may think that taking is better than giving; whereas, giving is much better and more superior to receiving. Giving emanates from being content. Those who do not know what contentment is would not be satisfied even



if they owned the whole world. They would not like to give even the smallest things to others. In his following lines, Rumi (q.s.) elegantly expresses that contentment does not harm anyone and Allah the Almighty's blessings are enough for all of the creations which will pour upon the servants:

"No one was ever deprived of life by being content; no one was ever made a king by covetousness. Allah does not withhold the daily bread not even from pigs and dogs: this rain and these clouds are not earned by Man. Just as you are pitiably enamored of the daily bread, so the daily bread is enamored of its consumer... Even if you do not run after it, your daily bread comes running to you because it is (so) fond of you. But if you run after it, it will become a trouble for you and brings you sorrow." (Mathnawi, V, verses: 2398-2401)

Since Allah the Almighty asks His servants to be content people, He does not like His servants not being satisfied with His blessings and asking for things from other people. Those who present their needs to others instead of Allah will experience an increase in poverty. However, those who behave modestly and beg to their Creator will find the real source of wealth. In fact, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) says:

"And whoever abstains from asking others for some financial help, Allah will give to him and save him from asking from others, Allah will make him self-sufficient." (Bukhari, Zakat, 18) Hakim b. Hizam (r.a.) narrates:

"Once I asked from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to give me some of the war booty, and he gave it to me. I asked again, and he gave me more. I asked again, and he gave me once more. Then he told me:

"O Hakim! This wealth is green and sweet (i.e. as tempting as fruits), and whoever takes it without greed, it will be blessed for him. Whoever takes it covetously, it will not have any blessings. These are like people who eat but cannot satisfy their hunger. The upper (i.e. giving) hand is better than the lower (i.e. taking) hand." Hakim added,

"I said, O Allah's Apostle! By Him who has sent you with the Truth I will never demand anything from anybody after you till I die."

Afterwards, Abu Bakr had called Hakim to give him something but he refused to accept anything from him. Then, Umar called him to give him something but he refused. Then Umar said,





“O Muslims! Be witnesses that I offered to Hakim his share which Allah has ordained for him from this booty and he refuses to take it.” Thus Hakim did not ask anybody for anything after the Prophet till he died (may Allah bestow His mercy upon him).” (Bukhari, Wasaya, 9)

Those who are content will be loved. Contentment gives its owner such an honor that no love for worldly possessions can enter his/her heart. While greedy people will give their lives in order to get the smallest benefits from possessions, a content poor person would not even be tempted to take the possession even if he/she finds a treasure full of gold. Those wealthy people who would greedily like to possess everything, whether it is lawful or not, are called beggars. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) advised us the following prescription so that we may be content and protected from begging:

“If anyone of you looked at a person who was made superior to him in property and in good appearance, then he should also look at the one who is inferior to him, and to whom he has been made superior.” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 30) Such a behavior is the most effective solution to not belittle Allah’s blessings upon us and fall into despair; because, the lack of contentment is one of the reasons of sorrow and unhappiness.

Just like in every other aspect of life, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) is the most excellent paradigm for us about the matter of contentment. He distributed all the worldly possessions he received and he never kept with him more than he needed. This is why he frequently prayed saying: *“O Allah, make the provision of Muhammad’s family sufficient just to sustain their lives.”* (Muslim, Zakat, 126)

The Prophet (pbuh) sometimes asked his companions to promise him that they would not ask for anything from anybody. Thawban (r.a.) says that:

“Once Allah’s messenger (pbuh) said:

“Whoever promises me not to beg for anything from people, I will guarantee for him/her the Heaven.” Upon this I said:

“I promise, O Messenger of Allah!”

The narrator of this hadith expressed that after this incident Thawban (r.a.) never asked for anything from anybody in his entire life. (Abu Dawud, Zakat, 27)



Contentment is a matter of the heart. Being content means neither staying away from foods and drinks nor stopping daily activities. Contentment does not prevent a believer from taking what he rightfully owns, either. In this matter, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) established the best measure for the believers. Umar (r.a.) narrates:

"From time to time Allah's Messenger gave me veteran-gratuity. And I told him:

"Would it not be better if you give this to someone poorer than I am?" The Prophet (pbuh) advised me:

"Take this. You can take something about which you are not greedy. Add it to your possessions. If you would like, give it in charity. However do not run after worldly property." (Bukhari, Zakat, 51)

The following tradition is also worth mentioning for it presents to us two different approaches about the same matter:

"...Abraham came after Ishmael's marriage in order to see how Ishmael was whom he had left before, but he did not find Ishmael at home. When he asked his daughter-in-law about his son, she replied,

"He has gone to hunt for our livelihood." Then he asked her about their way of living and their condition, and she replied,

"We are living in misery; we are living in hardship and destitution," complaining to him. He said,

"When your husband returns, convey my salutation to him and tell him to change the threshold of the gate of his house." When Ishmael came, he seemed to have felt something unusual, so he asked his wife,

"Has anyone visited you?" She replied,

"Yes, an old man of so-and-so description came and asked me about you and I informed him, and he asked about our state of living, and I told him that we were living in a hardship and poverty." Then Ishmael asked,

"Did he advise you anything?" She replied,

"Yes, he told me to convey his salutation to you and to tell you to change the threshold of your gate." Ishmael said,





"It was my father, and he has ordered me to divorce you. Go back to your family." So, Ishmael divorced her and married another woman from amongst the tribe of Jurhum.

Then Abraham stayed away from them for a period as long as Allah wished and called on them again but did not find Ishmael. So he came to Ishmael's wife and asked her about Ishmael. She said,

"He has gone in search of our livelihood." Abraham asked her,

"How are you getting on?" asking her about their sustenance and living. She replied,

"We are prosperous and we have everything in abundance." Then she thanked Allah. Abraham said,

"What kind of food do you eat?" She said: "Meat" He said,

"What do you drink?" She said, "Water" He said,

"O Allah! Bless their meat and water."

Then Abraham said to Ishmael's wife,

"When your husband comes, give my regards to him and tell him that he should keep firm the threshold of his gate." When Ishmael came back, he asked his wife,

"Did anyone call on you?" She replied,

"Yes, a good-looking old man came to me," so she praised him and added.

"He asked about you, and I informed him, and he asked about our livelihood and I told him that we were in a good condition." Ishmael asked her,

"Did he give you any piece of advice?" She said,

"Yes, he told me to give his regards to you and ordered that you should keep firm the threshold of your gate." On that Ishmael said,

"It was my father, and you are the threshold of the gate. He has ordered me to keep you with me." (Bukhari, Anbiya, 9)

Abraham (pbuh) decided about Ishmael's (pbuh) first wife that she was not content. He pointed out that family members should have good morals;



especially, for the happiness, continuation, and safety of his son's family. All thoughts and behavior which would harm this must be avoided. How nicely Rumi (q.s.) says:

"Anyone who is far from the feast of the Merciful Allah has the eye of a beggar, even if he be a sultan. As long as you are not content with what Allah bestowed upon you, a calamity or a trouble will come to meet you, it does not matter where you run for comfort and safety." (Mathnawi, II, verses: 588-590)

Contentment protects a believer from all kinds of troubles and calamities which are caused by worldly possessions. It strengthens a believer's faith and spirituality and increases his/her resolution. Contentment makes it easier for the believer to continue on the straight path by protecting him/her from making errors. It has the believer gain the maturity to love Allah and His servants. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) liked and praised a young believer who had such attributes. A summary of this incident is as follows:

When delegates from Banu Tujib, who had come to visit the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), wanted to go back to their town, Allah's Messenger gave them money more than he had given to others and asked:

"Is there anybody left amongst you who had not been given money?" They said:

"Yes, we had left our youngest one with our rides to take care of them." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told them:

"Send him to me." When they went back to their rides, they told the young man:

"Go to the Messenger of Allah and get your gift. We have already gotten ours and left after thanking the Prophet." When the young man came to Allah's Messenger (pbuh), he said:

"O Messenger of Allah! I am from the sons of Abza. I am a member of the group, which was here shortly before and you just fulfilled their requests. Would you please fulfill my request, too?" Our Prophet (pbuh) asked:

"What is your request?" The young man said:

"O Messenger of Allah! My wish is not like my friends' requests. They came here longing for Islam and they brought their alms with them. Please pray for me to Allah to bestow upon me His mercy, to treat me with His mercy,





and to give spiritual wealth to my heart.” Upon this, the Prophet (pbuh) prayed for him saying:

“O Allah! Forgive him and treat him with Your mercy. Bestow wealth to his heart.” Then he (pbuh) ordered that the young man is to be given his money like others.

The delegates of Banu Tujib went back to their town. The following year some of them met with the Prophet (pbuh) at Mina. They said: “We are from the sons of Abza.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked:

“What is the young man doing, who was with you last year?” They replied:

“O Messenger of Allah! We have not seen anybody more content than him, who has the blessings of Allah. If people divided the world among themselves, he would not turn and look at them.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) became so pleased with what he heard. He thanked Allah and prayed for the young man.

This young man became an example of merits amongst his tribe. He continued his life without holding worldly possessions too dear and as a content servant with the blessings of Allah. After the Prophet’s death, when people of Yemen were converting out of Islam, he reminded them of Allah and the message of Islam. Thanks to him not a single person from his tribe converted out of Islam. Later Abu Bakr (r.a.) asked about this young man, checked his conditions, and sent a letter and advised his governor of that region to treat the young man nicely. (May Allah be pleased with them all) (Ibn Qayyim, III, 54-55; Ibn Sa’d, I, 323)

Contentment is the manifestation of strong faith and endless trust in Allah. This is why it has been an attribute loved and praised by our Lord Almighty.

Contentment is to be satisfied with what you have and not to be greedy about what other people have. Because people who get too greedy are not aware of that they are losing what they already have. The following maxim from *Majalla* nicely summarizes this matter:

“Any person who hastens the accomplishment of a thing before its due time is punished by being deprived thereof.”



E. His *Tawakkul* (Trust) in Allah

Tawakkul is another moral principle which is the manifestation of strong faith and trust in Allah. *Tawakkul* means that after taking all the apparent measures and making all the necessary efforts to only rely and submit to Allah instead of the measures and efforts.

Tawakkul never means to give up working and holding up to the causes, and then to declare “I trust in Allah.” It does not mean laziness. In fact, when someone asked the Prophet (pbuh) whether he should trust in Allah with or without tying his ride, he (pbuh) told the man that “*first tie your ride and then trust in Allah*” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 60)

Tawakkul is something related to the end of an action not its beginning. Prayer has two different aspects: verbal and practical. To do everything to achieve one’s wishes is considered practical prayer; and to orally ask for them from Allah after doing everything needed to be done is called verbal prayer. *Tawakkul*, which encompasses both verbal and practical prayers, is the result of all the lofty feelings, such as leaving selfishness, pride, and arrogance and then realizing nothingness, weakness, and reliance only on Allah. *Tawakkul* originates from the faith that all power belongs to Allah and everything happens by His command.

One of the beautiful names of Allah is *Wakil*, which means the One who straightens the deeds of those who entrust them to Him, the One who can be relied on, and the One who controls and manages everything. Such an authority must be Eternal and All-Powerful. Relying upon beings and worldly property which are transient and weak are temporal and deceiving ambitions which end up with regret. Allah the Almighty leaves those who trust other beings alone with their trustees. This is why Allah the Almighty gives the following orders:

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ

“And put your trust in Him Who lives and dies not; and celebrate his praise ...” (al-Furqan 25; 58)

“...Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah...” (Al-i Imran 3; 159) And saying that “...And on Allah let all men of faith put their trust.” (Ibrahim 14; 11) Lord the Almighty commands His servants not to





rely on anything else. Because **“...And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, He will suffice him...”** (al-Talaq 65; 3)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) informs us that Allah the Almighty will protect His trusting servants both in this world and in the Hereafter and place them in His Heaven without questioning as follows:

“Previous ummahs were shown to me. I saw a prophet who had three-five followers with him. I saw a prophet with one or two followers. I saw another prophet who had nobody with him. Then I met a big crowd. I thought it was my ummah. I was told “it is the ummah of Moses; look up to horizon.” I looked and saw an enormous darkness. I was told that “These are your ummah. And there are seventy thousand people amongst them, who will enter Paradise unquestioned.”

Ibn Abbas (r.a.) said that at this point of his saying, the Prophet (pbuh) stood up and went home. Companions began to talk about who those believers could be. Some said “they were those who had been present at the Prophet’s sermons.” Some others said: “they were those who had been born after the advent of Islam and never knew about polytheism.” Other views, too, were presented. Just as they were discussing this matter, Allah’s Messenger came and asked:

“What are you conversing about?”

They said “we were talking about those who would enter Paradise without being questioned.” Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) told them:

“They are those who do not practice magic or let others do it, do not believe in curse, and rely upon their Lord.” ‘Ukkasha b. Mihsan al-Asadi then stood up wrapping the blanket around him and said:

“O Messenger of Allah, supplicate before Allah that He should make me one among them.” Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“You are one of them.”

Then, another companion stood up and said:

“O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah that He should make me one among them.”

This time Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:



“*Ukkasha has preceded you in this matter.*” (Muslim, Iman, 374)

This saying infers that those who do not rely upon unlawful factors but put their trust in Allah during hardships are given the good news of eternal happiness. The Prophet (pbuh), who formed *tawakkul* as a habit in his life, would often make the following invocation:

“O Allah, it is unto You that I surrender myself. I affirm my faith in You and repose my trust in You and turn to You in repentance and with Your help fought my adversaries. O Allah, I seek refuge in You with Your Power, lest You lead me astray. There is no god but You. You are ever-living that die not, while the Jinn and mankind die.” (Muslim, Dhikr, 67)

It is possible to see the reflections of the Prophet’s reliance on Allah in every aspect of his life. He would act in this spiritual mood while going in and out of his home, going to bed and waking up, and in short, he relied on Allah in taking every step of his life. Umm Salamah (r.a.) narrates that:

“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) never went out of my house without raising his eye to the sky and saying:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ أَلْهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ
أَنْ أَضِلَّ أَوْ أُضَلَّ أَوْ أَزِلَّ أَوْ أُزَلَّ
أَوْ أَظْلِمَ أَوْ أُظْلَمَ أَوْ أَجْهَلَ أَوْ يُجْهَلَ عَلَيَّ

“With the name of Allah! I trust in Allah. O Allah! I seek refuge in You! You lest I stray or be led astray, or slip or made to slip, or cause injustice, or suffer injustice, or do wrong, or have wrong done to me.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 102-103; Tirmidhi, Daawat, 35)

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) emphasized the significance of reliance to Allah and staying away from heedlessness. While believers were coming back from the expedition of Dhat al-Riqa’, midday came upon them while they were in a valley that had many thorny trees. Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) and the people dismounted and dispersed to rest in the shade of the trees. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) rested under a tree called *samurah* and hung his sword on it. Jabir (r.a.) narrates the rest of the incident as follows:





“We all took a nap and suddenly we heard Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) calling us. We woke up to see a bedouin with him. The Prophet said,

“This bedouin took out my sword while I was sleeping and when I woke up, I found the unsheathed sword in his hand and he challenged me saying,

“Who will save you from me?” I said thrice,

“Allah”

The Prophet did not punish him but sat down.” (Bukhari, Jihad, 84, 87; Muslim, Fadail, 13)

Even though Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) faced a near-death-situation, he did not fear because of his complete trust in his Lord Almighty and was able to say *“Allah will save me.”* The bedouin dropped his sword and submitted himself before the firmness and solemnity of the Prophet. And then Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) called his companions and personally showed them how reliance to Allah needed to be. On the other hand, he invited the bedouin to Islam instead of punishing him for his murder attempt. Because of the Prophet’s lofty approach, he could not help but say to his people later “I am coming from the presence of the best person.”

Companions saw the best manifestation of *tawakkul* from the Prophet himself, realized its true meaning, and applied it in their own lives. Yahia b. Murrah narrates:

“Ali (r.a.) used to go out to the mosque for night prayer (*tahajjud*) during his caliphate. One night we followed him for protection. After completing his prayer he came to us and asked:

“Why are you here?” We said:

“We keep guarding you.” He asked:

“Are you protecting me from the beings of heavens or from the creation on earth?” We said:

“From the people of earth” then Ali (r.a.) told us:

“Nothing happens on earth unless it was predestined in the heavens. Everyone has been given two guarding angels. They protect the person till the day destiny takes its toll. Then they leave him/her alone with his/her destiny. There is Allah the Almighty’s protection on me, too. This protection will end



when my time comes. A servant cannot taste his/her faith unless he knows with certainty that the written destiny will surely happen and the unwritten things never happen.” (Ibn Asakir, XLII, 552)

Those who do not trust in Allah and forget Him and think that everything happens by their own acts will eventually face their destiny. However, it will be without gaining Allah’s contentment and passing their worldly test. Whereas, reliance on Allah gets the servant closer to his/her Lord and helps him/her live life easily and peacefully.

F. His Altruism

“By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you give (freely) of that which you love; and whatever you give, of a truth Allah knows it well.” (Al-i Imran 3; 92)

Altruism (*i'thar*) means to prefer others over oneself and think about others’ needs before his/her own needs even when he/she is in need and will have to experience difficulty.

Altruism is the general characteristic of generous and kind people. Best manifestation of altruism can be seen in the life of the Messenger of Allah and then in the lives of his companions. This is stated in some verse and in the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh). In this respect, Allah the Almighty says in the Qur’an:

“But those who had homes in Medina before them and had adopted the Faith show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the latter, but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their own lot. And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity.” (al-Hashr 59; 9)

The reason for the revelation of this verse was to express the extraordinary generosity and altruism of the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions. One incident happened as follows:

“Abu Huraira (r.a.) reported that a man came to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) and said:





“I am hungry” and asked that the Prophet (pbuh) entertain him as a guest, but the Prophet had nothing with which he could feed him. Then Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked one of his wives for something to eat:

“By the One Who sent you as a messenger, there is nothing but water.” Then he requested food from his other wife. She said the same. After Allah’s Messenger got the same response from all of his wives, he asked his companions if there was any person who would entertain him as a guest that night. A person from the Ansar named Abu Talha stood up and took the man to his house. When he arrived at his house, he said to his wife:

“Is there anything at home to serve our guest?” She said:

“No only enough subsistence for our children.” He said:

“Distract their attention with something, and when the guest enters extinguish the lamp and so we can give him the impression that we are eating.”

So they sat down and the guest had his meal. And they went to their beds hungry. When it was morning Abu Talha (r.a.) went to Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) who said:

“Allah was well pleased with what you both did for your guest this night.”

(Bukhari, Tafsir, 59/6; Muslim, Ashribah, 172-173)

The Prophet’s willingness to serve the poor man and his search for food from his wives manifests how generous and self-sacrificing he was. The shortage of food in the Prophet’s wives’ homes is another exemplary point in this tradition. Maybe that same day the blessed mothers of believers, who would always give something when they were asked to, even if it were a single date fruit, had given their daily sustenance to somebody already.

Another reason for the revelation of this verse is reported as follows:

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) sent a lamb’s head to one of his companions. The companion thought that “my brother so and so is poorer and in more need than I am” and sent the Prophet’s gift to his Muslim brother. Then he sent the gift to another companion and this continued on. Hence, the Prophet’s gift circulated around seven houses and eventually it ended up at the first companion’s house. Then the above mentioned verse was revealed. (Hakim, II, 256)

A third reason for the revelation of this verse is the following incident:



“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) distributed the war booty taken from Bani Nadir among the Muhajirun. He did not give anything to the Ansar except three of them. Then he addressed to the Ansar:

“If you would like, you may leave all of what you gave to the Muhajirun before and get a share from the war booty. Or if you would like, you may ask for the things that you gave to them and get nothing from the booty.” Upon this the Ansar (may Allah be pleased with them all) gave the following magnificent response:

“We both are giving them from our property and leaving everything and do not want to be partners with them in sharing the war booty. (Razi, XXIX, 250; Qurtubi, XVIII, 25)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) praised Ansar’s characteristic as follows:

إِنَّكُمْ مَا عَلِمْتُ تَكْثُرُونَ عِنْدَ الْفَرْعِ وَتَقَلُّونَ عِنْدَ الطَّمْعِ

“As I see, your number increases when you are invited to join a battle or to help the needy; and it decreases when you are called to be given a worldly possession.” (Ali al-Muttaqi, XIV, 66)

There are many examples of altruism in the lives of the companions. In fact, Allah the Almighty praised and commended them in the following verses:

“And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, Saying, We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks. We only fear a Day of distressful Wrath from the side of our Lord. But Allah will deliver them from the evil of that Day, and will shed over them a Light of Beauty and a blissful Joy.” (al-Insan 76; 8-11)

They certainly learned altruism from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Of course it is impossible to reach his level of altruism and self-sacrifice. His honorable life is teemed with the manifestations of this attribute. Shal bin Sa’d (r.a.) narrated:

“A lady brought a *burdah*⁶⁷ to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The lady said,

67. * A type of blanket used by the Arabs as a wrap; or mantle; or cloak





“O Allah’s Apostle! I have knitted this *burdah* with my own hands for you to wear it.”

Allah’s Apostle took it and he was in need of it. Allah’s Apostle came out to us and he was wearing it. A man among the people saw it and said,

“O Allah’s Apostle! Would you give it to me to wear?” The Prophet said, “Yes.” Then he sat there for some time and then he went to his house. He folded it and sent it to the man. The people said to that man,

“You have not done a right thing. You asked him for it, though you know that he does not put down anybody’s request.” The man said,

“By Allah! I have only asked him so that it may be my shroud when I die.” Sahl added,

“Later that *burdah* really became his shroud.” (Bukhari, Libas, 18; Adab, 39)

As in this incident, when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) met someone in need, he would prefer him/her over himself. He would want the things more than the necessities to be donated to people in need. In other words, he loved to share everything he possessed with other people and he accepted altruism as a principle for his life. He pointed out the blessings of helping others saying that: “*The food for two persons is sufficient for three, and the food of three persons is sufficient for four persons.*” (Bukhari, At’imah, 11) For him, the real possession of something can be achieved by giving it to others and receiving it to the eternal life. He stated that Allah the Almighty would protect and increase the property spent for His sake and return it to its owner many times more in the Hereafter. (Muslim, Zakat, 63) One day he slaughtered a lamb and asked his family to distribute its meat to the poor. Then he asked Aisha (r.a.):

“*What is left from it?*” Aisha (r.a.) replied:

“Only the shoulder blade.” Upon this Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“*You mean that all of it has become our property except this shoulder blade.*” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 33) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) praised and loved those who preferred his brother over himself. This is stated in the following saying: “*The Prophet said, “When the people of the Ash’ari tribe ran short of food during the holy battles, or the food of their families in Medina ran short, they would collect all their remaining food in one sheet and then distribute it*



among themselves equally by measuring it with a bowl. So, these people are from me, and I am from them.” (Bukhari, Shirkah, 1; Muslim, Fadail al-Sahabah, 167)

Aisha’s (r.a.) following report is a good example that shows how the Prophet (pbuh) addressed acts of self-sacrifice. This report also shows how great the rewards in the Hereafter will be. Aisha (r.a.) said:

“A poor woman came to me along with her daughters. I gave her three dates. She gave a date to each of them and then she picked up one date and brought it to her mouth in order to eat it, but her daughters expressed desire to eat it. She then divided the date that she intended to eat between them. This kind treatment of her impressed me so much that I mentioned what she did to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh). Thereupon, he said:

“Because of her action, verily Allah has assured Paradise for her, or He has rescued her from Hell-Fire.” (Muslim, Birr, 148)

Altruism and unselfishness, one of the commands of Islam, let the people of the age of happiness live the life of Paradise in this world. Companions, however, even regarded altruism as inadequate and felt sorry for not being able to do more. Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both) elegantly states the altruism and spiritual level of the people of the age of happiness as follows:

“We lived in such an age that no one would consider himself/herself more deserving of gold and silver than his/her Muslim brothers and sisters. Now we live in such an age that we love gold and silver more than our brothers and sisters.” (Haythami, X, 285)

When we listen to the examples of unselfishness even from the age which Ibn Umar was complaining about, we admire them. What an astounding example the unselfishness of Harith b. Hisham, Ikrima b. Abi Jahl, Iyash b. Abi Rabia (may Allah be pleased with them all) was. They preferred each other over themselves and sent water given to them to the other during the Battle of Yarmuk when they were all badly wounded and extremely thirsty. Finally all of them became martyrs without drinking a single drop of water. (Hakim, III, 270) History has not witnessed such an example of altruism, maybe it will never be able to witness it ever again.

These unselfish and self-sacrificing brave men were trained by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and learned the true meaning of faith from him. This





was why they sent the water given to them under the most unbearable situation to their Muslim brother.

Gulam Halil, the well-known opponent of Sufism, presented a hostile approach towards all Sufis. He had a group of Sufis, amongst them was Abu al-Husain al-Nuri (d. 295 A.H.), arrested and sent them to the center of the caliphate. The Abbasid caliph of the time issued a decree for their punishment by death. When the executioner was going to behead one of the Sufis, Abu al-Husain al-Nuri voluntarily and happily came forward. People were amazed by his willingness. The executioner told him:

“O brave man! You are voluntarily coming forward but this sword is not something to be wanted. It is not your turn, why are you in a hurry?” Al-Nuri replied:

“My way is established on self-sacrificing. One’s life is the most valuable thing. Thus, I would like to sacrifice my last few breaths for my brothers. For me a single breath on this earth is more valuable and loveable than a thousand years in the Hereafter, because this world is the place to serve others; whereas the afterlife is the place to be close to Allah the Almighty. Closeness to Allah can only be achieved by serving others. Nevertheless, I sacrifice my last breaths for my brothers.” (Hujwiri, p. 302)

After the death of the Ottoman sultan, Osman Beg, it was custom that the eldest son Alaaddin Beg, who had the support of all the prominent members of the state, be enthroned; but, he preferred Orhan Beg over himself and asked him to be the head of the state. While presenting Orhan Beg, Alaaddin Beg said:

“My Brother! Our ancestor’s supplication is with you. He appointed you as the commander of the army; therefore, you deserve to be the head of the state.”

Later Alaaddin Beg became the greatest supporter of Orhan Beg. He pioneered the conquest of Rumelia and his life ended as a martyr. (Ziya Nur Aksun, I, 36)

The difference between all of the above-mentioned examples and the lives of contemporary people is remarkable. It is obvious where the problem is in today’s world, in which people try to destroy each other’s lives; sharing has been long forgotten and selfishness has prevailed all over the society; helping



others has become a means of vanity; and expectations have come into prominence. People have forgotten altruism and unselfishness, which were the basic characteristics of the prophetic ethics, and they have begun to love each other not for the sake of Allah but for their own interests.

Altruism and sacrificing ourselves for the needs of others means to prepare a nice place in the real life of the Hereafter. This was the way of our Prophet (pbuh) and his companions. What we need to do is to be in an effort to get closer to them.

G. His Patience

“O you who believe! Seek help with patient perseverance and prayer: for Allah is with those who patiently persevere.”

(al-Baqarah 2; 153)

The Arabic term *ṣabr* or patience has several meanings like to keep moderation, to endure pain, to keep calm before hardship, and to exhibit firmness on the path directed by Islam and human reason. Imam Nawawi explains it as follows: “Patience is to compel the self to fulfill the commands given to it. And this can be achieved by means of enduring the difficulties of the acts of worship, other troubles, and harms that will save from sins.”

Patience is a spiritual and moral characteristic encouraged by religion. It is a manifestation of faith. The object of patience is to keep firmness, not to become uneasy, and panic before unexpected incidents.

However, patience does not mean to comply with condemnation, derogation, and sluggishness. Additionally, it does not mean to endure the attacks directed upon human dignity and to not show protest against them, because Islam does not approve patience before unlawful acts. On the contrary, believers are expected to fight physically or orally against such acts, and if that is not possible, they are required to at least express hatred. Enduring hardship, for which a person has enough strength to overcome, or being indifferent towards necessities, which can be easily taken care of, is not considered patience but weakness and laziness.

Patience is a calming and consoling means that prevents believers from rushing and making regrettable decisions. This is why real patience is the one



which is shown as soon as hardship strikes. As it was narrated by Anas bin Malik:

The Prophet passed by a woman who was weeping beside a grave. He told her to fear Allah and be patient. She did not recognize the Prophet (pbuh) and said to him:

“Go away, for you have not been afflicted with a calamity like mine.” Then, she was informed that he was the Prophet, so she went to the Prophet’s house. There she did not find anybody guarding his house. Thus she could go to the presence of the Prophet. Then (presenting her apologies) she said to him,

“I did not recognize you.” He (pbuh) responded:

إِنَّمَا الصَّبْرُ عِنْدَ الصَّدْمَةِ الْأُولَى

“Verily, the patience is at the first stroke of a calamity.” (Bukhari, Janaaiz, 32)

In another saying, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) informs us about the types and virtues of patience as follows: *“There are three types of patience: patience during times of hardship without complaints, patience in servitude (or patience to fulfill the obligations), and patience in abstaining from evil and prohibited acts. Allah the Almighty writes three hundred stages for those who show patience until the hardship is removed. Allah the Almighty writes six hundred stages for those who show patience in servitude and piety. Between two stages there is a distance as much as the distance between the sky and the seventh layer under the world. Allah the Almighty writes three hundred degrees for those who show patience in abstaining from sins. Between two stages there is a distance as much as the distance between the world and the Throne (of Allah).”* (Suyuti, II, 42; Daylami, II, 416)

There are many verses in the Qur’an about patience. In the following verse, Allah the Almighty states that patience is one of the tests in this world:

“Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere,” (al-Baqarah 2; 155)

Allah the Almighty tests his servants to see who will show patience and then to reward them: **“And verily We shall try you till We know those of you who strive hard (for the cause of Allah) and the steadfast, and till We test**

your record.” (Muhammad 47; 31) Allah loves His patient servants, and informs us that He is with such servants; and, He promises that He will abundantly bestow His spiritual rewards upon such servants. This is stated in the following verse:

إِنَّمَا يُؤَفِّي الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

“...those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure.” (al-Zumar 39; 10)

One of the beautiful names of our Lord is **“al-Sabur”**, which means the Patient or the One who shows much patience. The Prophet (pbuh) explains this Divine name in the following saying: *“None is more patient than Allah against the harmful saying. He hears from the people they ascribe children to Him, yet He gives them health and (supplies them with) provision.”* (Bukhari, Adab, 71) In order to improve his/her patience a believer should often remember and contemplate about the Divine name of **“al-Sabur.”**

In respect to the benefits of patience, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) says that *“there are great benefits in your patience before the things that you do not like.”* (Ibn Hanbal, I, 307)

In another saying, the Prophet (pbuh) states that,

“Strange are the states of a believer for there is good in his every affair. And this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer. Because if he faces an occasion to feel delight, he thanks Allah, thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble, shows resignation, and endures it patiently, there is a good for him in it.” (Muslim, Zuhd, 64)

Patience, which is described by the Prophet (pbuh), is the common characteristic of all the prophets. All of them faced various hardships while conveying Allah’s message. They were exiled from their lands and thrown into jails by the rulers of their time. Many of them even became martyrs for the sake of their mission. However, they showed patience and continued to fulfill their mission. The life of our Prophet (pbuh) was filled with manifestations of patience. Tariq b. Abdullah al-Muharibi (r.a.) narrates one of his observations about the hardships endured by the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:





“I saw Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) in the market of Zulmajaz. He was wearing red attire. He was addressing people:

“O people! Say that there is no god but Allah and save yourselves.” A man with a rock in his hand was following the Prophet (pbuh) and shouting:

“O people! Do not believe and obey him for he is a liar.” The stones thrown by him caused the Prophet’s feet to bleed. I asked the people:

“Who is this person?” They said:

“This is one of the sons of Abdulmuttalib.” I asked again:

“Who is the other man stoning him?” They replied:

“He is his uncle Abu Lahab.” (Darakutni, III, 44-45)

Such saddening incidents happened to the Prophet (pbuh) many times in his twenty-three-year long prophethood life. One of these incidents is narrated by Mudrik al-Azdi (r.a.):

“I was performing pilgrimage with my father. When I arrived and encamped at Mina, I met a group of people. I asked my father:

“Why have these people gathered here?” He told me:

“Because of this man, who left his tribe’s faith.” When I looked towards the direction that my father was pointing at, I saw the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He was telling the people:

“O people! Say that there is no god but Allah and save yourselves.” Some people were spitting at him; others were throwing dirt at him and some people were verbally abusing him. This situation continued till noon. Just then a young lady came with a bowl of water and a handkerchief. She was crying. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) took the bowl and drank some water and then washed his hands and face. He raised his head and said:

“My beloved daughter! Please cover yourself. Do not be afraid that your father will be trapped and get killed; do not fear that your father will be disgraced.” We asked who that young lady was and we were told that *“she was his daughter Zainab.”* (Haythami, VI, 21)

The Prophet’s patience against all kinds of persecution and torture in the path of conveying the message of Islam even astonished the poet who wrote



that “no matter how infinite perseverance is, there is an end to it.” He (pbuh) always faced great pains from his childhood till his death. He sent his father, his mother, his grandfather, his uncle Abu Talib, his beloved wife Khatijah, Hamza the master of the martyrs, and his children one by one to Allah the Almighty. He himself placed many of his companions into their graves, but none of these impaired his balance and resolution or made him lose his patience.

Even though he and his companions were exposed to the worst type of tortures, they maintained their patience as the order of Allah the Almighty. When companions lost their patience, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) refreshed their perseverance by giving them hope and glad tidings. Khabbab b. Arat (r.a.) narrates:

“I came to the Prophet while he was leaning against his sheet cloak in the shade of the Ka’ba. We were suffering greatly from the pagans in those days. We complained to him saying:

“Will you not invoke Allah to help us?” He sat down with a red face and said:

“There were those before you who were buried into pits, and then a saw might be put over the parting of his head which would split it into two parts, yet that would never make him abandon his religion. Again there were those before you who used to be combed with iron combs so that nothing of his flesh or nerves would remain on his bones; yet that would never make him desert his religion. Allah will surely complete this religion (i.e. Islam) so that a traveler from Sana to Hadramaut will not be afraid of anybody except Allah. Or he would not be worried about the wolf, lest it should harm his sheep, but you are in a hurry.” (Bukhari, Manaqib al-Ansar, 25, 29)

While fighting with the enemies of the religion Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) endured not only their persecutions but also the hardships caused by the lack of material means; however, he would never put these forward as excuses. Even at the worst times of poverty and shortage he continued his efforts on the path of Allah the Almighty. He and his companions endured all kinds of hardship that resulted from poverty. One example was narrated by Abu Musa al-Ashari (r.a.) as follows:

“We went out in the company of the Prophet for an expedition and we were six persons having one camel which we rode in rotation. So, due to ex-





cessive walking our feet were injured badly. My feet, too, got hurt and my nails had fallen. We used to wrap our feet with the pieces of cloth, and for this reason, this expedition was named *Dhat-ur-Riqā* as we wrapped our feet with rags.”

Abu Burda, who reported this tradition, said that: “When Abu Musa narrated this tradition, he felt regretful to do so and said: “I did not do a good thing by revealing this.” Probably he disliked to have disclosed his good deed performed just for the sake of Allah.” (Bukhari, Maghazi, 31)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) shared the same conditions with his companions no matter how hard they were; and he never saw himself superior to them. If his people were hungry, he and his family were the first ones who suffered from hunger. Whereas, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had been offered the wealth of the world by Allah the Almighty and he was told that if he had wished, mountains of Mecca could have been turned into gold. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) refused all of those saying:

“I would endure hunger one day and fill my stomach and thank Allah on another day. Because faith is formed from two halves, which complete each other: one half is gratefulness and the other half is patience. Allah the Almighty says:

“...Verily in this there are Signs for such as are firmly patient and constant, grateful appreciative.” (Ibrahim 14; 5)” (Hakim, II, 484)

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) endured the harshness of the bedouins and torments of the hypocrites and managed them kindly, even after he became victorious and established his state. He asked his ummah to do the same and serve people nicely saying:

“A believer who blends in with people and endures their harshness is better than the believer who does not get in to the public and does not endure their roughness.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 55) It has been narrated on the authority of Abdullah b. Mas’ud (r.a.) who relates the following incident which is a nice example in this respect:

“While the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was distributing the war booty after the Battle of Hunain in Jiranah, people bothered him so much that he related the story of a Prophet who had been beaten by his people: *“Allah the Almighty had sent one of his servants to his people as a messenger. His people*



had beaten him and wounded his head. But that servant of Allah was saying while he was wiping the blood from his face: "My Lord, forgive my people, for they do not know." (Ibn Hanbal, I, 456; Muslim, Jihad, 105)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) also presented exemplary patience for us during his sicknesses. Abu Sa'd al-Hudri (r.a.) visited the Prophet (pbuh) when he was sick and witnessed how great his endurance to his pain was. Abu Said continues his narration as follows:

"I put my hand upon him and I could even feel his body fever under the blanket. I said:

"O Messenger of Allah! You have a really high fever." He (pbuh) responded:

"We (prophets) are like this. Troubles come to us many times more, and in return multiple rewards are given to us."

I asked:

"O Messenger of Allah! Who among the people faces most of the hardships?" He said:

"Prophets" I asked again:

"Then who?" He replied:

"The righteous ones" and he made the following explanation:

"Some among them has to endure so much poverty that they cannot find anything to cover themselves except a cloak. But they feel joy from poverty just as you feel joy from affluence." (Ibn Majah, Fitan, 23)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked his followers to endure the great and small hardships of life and expect their rewards from Allah the Almighty. He (pbuh) informed us that servants who are rested by their two beloved things (i.e., his eyes) and then who maintain their patience will be rewarded by Paradise by Allah the Almighty. (Bukhari, Marda, 7) He also told us that a servant who thanks Allah and maintains his patience during his sickness will enter Paradise if he dies as a result of this sickness; if he recovers from it, his flesh will be replaced by better flesh; his blood will be replaced by better blood; and his sins will be forgiven. (Muwatta, 'Ayn, 5) This is why believers should endure the



sicknesses and hardships which they are faced with and hope for their rewards from Allah the Almighty.

Patience before illnesses and troubles lets people gain Paradise. One incident which clearly manifests this fact is as follows:

It was narrated by Ata bin Abi Rabah (r.a.):

“Ibn Abbas said to me, “Shall I show you a woman of the people of Paradise?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “This black lady came to the Prophet and said, “I get attacks of epilepsy and my body becomes uncovered; please invoke Allah for me.” The Prophet said (to her), “If you wish, be patient and you will have (enter) Paradise; and if you wish, I will invoke Allah to cure you.” She said, “I will remain patient,” and added “but I become uncovered, so please invoke Allah for me that I may not become uncovered.” So he prayed Allah for her.” (Bukhari, Marda, 6)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) also taught those who are inflicted by illnesses how to pray. Umm Salama (r.a.) reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying: If any Muslim who suffers some calamity says, what Allah has commanded him,

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. اَللّٰهُمَّ اَجْرِنِيْ
فِيْ مُصِيبَتِيْ وَآخِلْفْ لِيْ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا

“We belong to Allah and to Him shall we return; O Allah, reward me for my affliction and give me something better than it in exchange for it,” Allah will give him something better than it in exchange. When my husband, Abu Salama, died I said:

“Which Muslim is better than Abu Salama whose family was the first to emigrate to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)?” I then continued the above mentioned prayer, and Allah gave me Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) in exchange of Abu Salama” (Muslim, Janaiz, 3)

Let us mention another example in this respect from the companions of the Prophet (pbuh).

After the Battle of Uhud the daughter of Abdulmuttalib Safiya walked towards the martyrs to see her brother Hamza. Her son Zubair (r.a.) stopped her on the way and told her:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asks you to go back.” She said:

“Why? Should not I see my brother? I have already heard that he was butchered. He suffered all these for the sake of Allah. Of course nothing less could console us. If Allah wishes I will remain patient and expect its reward from Allah.” Zubair went to Allah’s Messenger and told him everything his mother said. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), mercy to the universe, responded:

“Then let her see her brother.” Safiya went to her brother’s body and prayed for him. (Ibn Hajar, *al-Isabah*, IV, 349)

How great her patience was! Hamza was loved by everybody and had done so many great services on the path of Islam that he had deserved to be called “the lion of Allah.” The terrible end of the Muslim hero was one of the hardest things to endure in the world. However, it was enough to console Safiya (r.a.) that her brother’s sufferings were for the sake of Allah. She maintained her patience and hoped for the reward for her patience from Allah the Almighty.

Indeed the greatest sorrow for the believers, which was also the hardest one to endure, was the death of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). On that day, as was reported by Anas (r.a.), everything in Medina was darkened. Companions, who could not believe his death, unwillingly buried the Prophet’s blessed body. (Ibn Hanbal, III, 221, 268, 287; Tirmidhi, *Manaqib*, 3) Despite all these, believers endured the death of the Messenger of Allah and buried their pain into their hearts. All the other hardships were next to nothing in their eyes. It certainly was much easier for believers to endure hardships remembering and comparing them to the death of Prophet (pbuh). Indeed, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) pointed out this fact by saying that *“the believing servants, who were inflicted by troubles and hardships of this world, should console themselves and maintain their patience by thinking about the calamity they had faced by my death.”* (Muwatta, Janaiz, 41)

To summarize, patience is the safest way to be saved from hardships and sorrows of the world and to attain comfort. Because, the medicine of patience both removes the curtains of heedlessness from the servants’ eyes and relieves





and opens their hearts. Allah the Almighty has created many beneficial and effective cures; however, human beings have seen no remedies more useful than patience.

H. His Bravery

“(It is the practice of those prophets) who preach the Messages of Allah, and fear Him and fear none but Allah ...”

(Al-Ahzab 33; 39)

Bravery means chivalry, courage, valor, and heroism. It is the state of keeping anger in moderation between outburst of anger and cowardice. It means to show courage and to not be demoralized in fight, or in the presence of violence and danger, and to belittle death.

The extreme state of courage is called *tahawwur*, which means to suddenly get upset and to unnecessarily put oneself in danger. *Tahawwur* also implies to start a fight with an enemy who is much stronger than oneself so as to throw oneself into a certain death. What is asked from a true believer is to not use the animal-like courage which is encouraged by the poetry of the Age of Ignorance; but such bravery that generates from the strong belief in Allah and Judgment Day.

The paucity of courage, on the other hand, means cowardice, which is manifested by not maintaining patience and getting scared and running away from fighting.

Najdah is another term, which connotes a similar meaning. *Najdah* means to remain patient and persevere before fearful and unusual situations and not to do something improper as a result of fear.

The basis of courage is the submission to and contentment with Allah's Will. This is why cowardice and abasement are not suitable characteristics for a true believer.

Courage, on the other hand, should be shown in situations ordered or allowed by Islam not in situations forbidden by Islam or because of the intention of vanity.



إِذْ تُضْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلُونَّ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَيْكُمْ

“When you ran off precipitately and did not wait for anyone, and the Messenger was calling you from your rear...” (Al-i Imran 3; 153)

Courage should be shown not in unlawful matters and with the intention of show off but in matters ordered and allowed by religion. For instance, actions which look courageous in appearance, such as persecution and using force upon others, and usurping other's rights, are in fact actions prohibited by Islam.

The utmost level of both characteristics of courage and *najdah* existed in the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Abdullah b. Umar (r.a.) said that “I have not seen anybody more generous and more courageous than the Prophet (pbuh).” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 373) In fact, the Prophet (pbuh) tirelessly continued with his mission to convey the message of Islam, even though he faced severe oppression from the start. This was such a courageous behavior that nobody could have shown. He even took the risk of death and continued his journey by sacrificing everything he had.

When Allah the Almighty ordered him to migrate to Medina, polytheists of Quraish, who heard this, besieged his house and prepared to kill him with their swords as soon as he got out. Allah's Messenger (pbuh), on the other hand, fearlessly opened his doors, sprinkled dirt over the heads of polytheists, and went through them by reciting the thirty-sixth chapter (Yasin) of the Qur'an. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 227-228)

A while after he (pbuh) migrated to Medina, when believers were allowed to fight against the polytheists, everybody witnessed manifestations of his bravery. In this respect, Ali b. Abi Talib (r.a.) said that: “We were taking refuge behind the Prophet (pbuh) during the Battle of Badr. On that day he was the closest one to the enemy and the bravest and the strongest one of the people.” (Ibn Hanbal, I, 86)

Another manifestation of his courage was seen in the Battle of Uhud. A polytheist on a camel came forward and challenged believers to send someone to fight. When he saw that everybody feared him, he repeated his challenge three times. Upon this Zubair b. Awwam (r.a.) went towards him. He jumped



and caught the man and they began to fight. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told Zubair:

"Pull him down; make him fall down." The man fell down and Zubair (r.a.) killed him. Then the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"If Zubair had not come forward, I was going to face him for everybody had stayed behind." (Halabi, II, 235)

Again in the Battle of Uhud, Ubay b. Halaf, a polytheist from Quraish, was shouting: "Where is Muhammad?" and coming towards the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saying: "O Muhammad! I should not survive, if you survive in this battle." Companions wanted to stop him, but the Prophet (pbuh) told them: *"Let him come."* Every time companions attempted to stand against him, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) ordered them to hold off. Seeing the bravery of the Messenger of Allah, Ubay b. Halaf got scared and began to run away. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) shouted behind him: *"O liar! Where are you running?"* and caught him from his neck and threw him down. (Ibn Sa'd, II, 46)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had encouraged his companions at the severest times of the battles when people had been running away. Muhammad b. Maslamah said that: "I heard with my own ears and saw with my own eyes that Muslims were defeated and climbing up the mountain at the Battle of Uhud. Allah's Messenger was calling them behind: *"O so and so! Come towards me. O so and so! Come towards me. I am the Messenger of Allah."* (Waqidi, I, 237)

About this incident Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلَوْنَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُخْرَيْكُمْ

"Behold! You were climbing up the high ground, without even casting a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger (standing bravely) in your rear was calling you back..." (Al-i Imran 3; 153)

The war was over and both parties had left the battle field giving about the same number of casualties. While leaving the battle field Abu Sufyan and his companions told Umar (r.a.): "We promise that we will come to Badr and fight with you next year." Umar waited for Allah's Messenger (pbuh) to give them a response. Then the Prophet (pbuh) told Umar (r.a.): *"Okay! Tell them that let that place be a meeting place between us and them."* When the appointment

time came, agents from the Quraish and hypocrites did everything they could to prevent facing the believers in battle because of their fear. When the effects of these efforts began to be seen among the believers the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) uttered the following words showing his bravery and audacity:

“I swear Allah on whose hands my life depends that I will go to Badr even if I have nobody coming with me.” After this Allah the Almighty helped the believers and gave firmness in their hearts. (Ibn Sa’d, II, 59)

Another day, when the Prophet (pbuh) showed his bravery, was the day of Hunain. On that day when everybody was running away from the enemy, our Prophet (pbuh) was riding his horse forward and approaching them without paying attention to his companions, who were trying to stop him. (Muslim, Jihad, 76)

As we can see from the above mentioned examples, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) knew no fear all his life and he inspired courage to his companions. In this regard, Anas b. Malik (r.a.) narrates:

“The Prophet was the best among the people both in physical shape and character and was the most generous and the bravest of them. Every time when a scary cry was heard or something terrifying happened in Medina, Allah’s Messenger would borrow Abu Talha’s horse called Mandub and ride it towards the direction of the sound. When a cry for help was heard we saw that Mandub arrived there like a wind. Once, the people of Medina got afraid of a sound. So the people went towards the sound, but the Prophet having gone to the sound before them, met them saying, “Don’t be afraid, don’t be afraid” while he was riding Abu Talha’s horse and carrying a sword slung at his neck. Then the Prophet (pbuh) said about Mandub, “I found it fast like a strong flood, or, it is the flood indeed.” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 373; Bukhari, Adab, 39)

Imam Busiri expresses the bravery of the Prophet (pbuh), his help to his ummah, and his enemies’ fear from him as follows:

وَلَنْ تَرَ مِنْ وَلِيِّيْ غَيْرِ مُتَّصِرٍ بِهِ وَلَا مِنْ عَدُوِّ غَيْرِ مُنْقَصِمٍ

You cannot see anybody among his friends who has not reached victory
Similarly not a single one of his enemies could escape from defeat

Below is another example of bravery from the lives of the companions, which is achieved by being a believer. Together with the women and children,





the Prophet's aunt Safiyah (r.a.) was in Hassan b. Thabit's mansion which was called Fari during the Battle of the Trench. A ten-man team from the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraiza came and began to shoot arrows at the mansion. They tried to enter it. One of them was circling around the mansion and looking for an opening. Meanwhile, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and his companions were fighting with the enemy in the trenches.

When Safiya (r.a.) saw that there was nobody to help, she covered her head, took a stick in her hand, and went out of the mansion. She quietly came behind the Jew and killed him with the stick. Other Jews who saw this incident said:

"We had been told that the women in this building were unguarded." Then they left. (Haythami, VI, 133-34; Waqidi, II, 462)

In order to protect their lives, properties, and honors Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and his companions did not hesitate to do whatever was necessary. Another incident proving this is as follows: An Ansari lady went shopping at a jewelry store owned by a Jewish man. A companion named Amr, who saw that the Jewish store owner had attacked the honor of the Ansari lady, bravely defended her and killed the Jewish man. Upon this the tribe of Banu Qaynuqa got together and martyred Amr. Because they broke the agreement with this action, the Prophet (pbuh) prepared a troop and declared a war upon them. (Waqidi, I, 176-77)

One of the prominent sufis, Najmuddin Kubra (q.s.), who got his inspiration from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and his companions, fought along with his disciples and got martyred when his city Harazm was invaded by Mongols. Brave sufi fighters, who settled and provided the security along the Muslim land, became the most significant representatives of courage and bravery in Islamic history.



I. His Generosity

“Those who (in Charity) spend of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.”

(al-Baqara 2; 274)

Generosity is conveyed in Arabic with the words of “*saha*” and “*jud*.” It is a high moral quality which ensures a person to help the needy out of his/her means for the sake of Allah the Almighty. Muslim scholars express that generosity has different manifestations depending upon the state of the heart and grade it as follows:

- *Sahawat* which means to give part of one’s property and it constitutes the lowest level of generosity.
- *Jud* which denotes, just as Abu Bakr (r.a.) did, to distribute most of one’s property and to leave behind only a small amount of it.
- And *I’sar* which means to give up something which is needed by the owner and endure the loss and hardship that occurs from giving it up.

Good morals such as kindness, forgiveness, munificence, helping and giving charity to friends and relatives are the distinct characteristics of a generous person. What is important here is not the action itself but the intention and the reason which leads to generosity. Therefore, generous contributions, which are done out of vanity or pride, do not mean anything because of the insincere intentions. True generosity is the one done for the sake of Allah and out of piety.

Generosity is one of the attributes of Allah, for one of His names is “*al-Karim*” (al-Infitar 82; 6) meaning the One who is very kind and endlessly generous towards His servants. In addition, other Divine names such as al-Rahman (Most Gracious), al-Rahim (Most Benevolent), al-Wahhab (The Bestower), al-Latif (The Subtly Kind), al-Tawwab (The Ever Relenting), al-Ghaffar (The Forgiving), al-Afuww (The Effacer), al-Rauf (The Pitying), and al-Hadi (The Guide) prove Allah’s generosity from different perspectives. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:



“Allah the Almighty is Jawad, or He is Generous and Kind; therefore He loves generosity. He also loves good morals and dislikes bad morals.” (Suyuti, I, 60) Again in a similar saying, the Prophet (pbuh) calls Allah the Almighty as *Jawad*:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ يُحِبُّ الطَّيِّبَ، نَظِيفٌ يُحِبُّ النَّظَافَةَ،
كَرِيمٌ يُحِبُّ الْكَرَمَ، جَوَادٌ يُحِبُّ الْجُودَ

“Indeed Allah is Good and He loves good and pleasant; He is Clean and he loves cleanliness; He is Kind and loves kindness; He is Jawad and loves generosity.” (Tirmidhi, Adab, 41)

These Divine Names show that the most perfect state of generosity belongs to Allah the Almighty; because He knows what every creation in the universe needs and how much when they need it, so He bestows upon them properly. Since He also does not need anything or anybody and is free from deficiencies, He does not need anything in return for His blessings. In Ibn Arabi’s words, “when there was no creation, Allah the Almighty did the most generous action and created the creation.”

The Most Generous Allah orders His servants to get shares from these Divine Names and to become characterized by the same moral qualities. Allah the Almighty states in the Qur’an:

“O you who believe! Spend out of the bounties We have provided for you, before the day comes when no bargaining will avail, nor friendship nor intercession. Those who reject faith are the wrongdoers.” (al-Baqara 2; 254)

In this verse, Allah the Almighty expresses that generosity can be performed only during the life in this world. When the time comes and the doors of opportunities are closed, servants will not have the chance to do generous actions; because the afterlife is not the place of earning but the place of getting accountable for. This verse also points out that generosity will protect humans from all kinds of hardships, sadness, and grief in the Hereafter. Those who do not act accordingly will do the greatest harm to themselves for they are ungrateful for the blessings of Allah the Almighty.



In some other verses, generosity is likened to trade and is regarded as the best loan given to Allah the Almighty:

“Who is he that will lend unto Allah a goodly loan that He may double it for him and he shall have an excellent reward?” (al-Hadid 57; 11)

This good loan (*qard hasan*) asked by Allah the Almighty from His servants should be given sincerely and from the part of the property which may satisfy the needs. Giving loans to the needy, giving them enough time for payment, treating the loaner nicely and even donating the debt if it is necessary are all included in the meaning of *qard hasan*. Another verse in this regard is as follows:

“And if (the debtor) is in straitened circumstances, then let there be postponement until (he is in) ease; and that you remit (the debt) as alms would be better for you, if you knew.” (al-Baqara 2; 280)

Expressing that generous people are among the people whom can be coveted, the Prophet (pbuh) said, *“Do not wish to be like anyone except in two cases. (The first is) A person, whom Allah has given wealth and he spends it righteously; (the second is) the one whom Allah has given wisdom (the Holy Qur’an) and he acts according to it and teaches it to others.”* (Bukhari, ‘Ilm, 15)

Property and wealth only belong to Allah and He is the Bestower of the blessings. The poor and the needy have their right in these blessings. This is why the most decent action for a believer is to spend the wealth on the path of its real Owner. The feeling of generosity comes from this belief, too.

Generosity has many great worldly and otherworldly consequences. First of all, Allah the Almighty loves His generous servants and makes His other servants love them, too. Consequently, generous people get close to Heaven and away from Hell. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated that:

“A generous person is close to Allah, to Paradise, to other people, and is away from the Hell fire; whereas a stingy person is away from Allah, away from Paradise, away from people and is close to the Hell fire. The generous but illiterate is more endearing to Allah the Almighty than the stingy that is observant of his/her religious duties.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 40) This is why it is reported that Allah the Almighty will not befriend the miserly, foolish, and arrogant people.



The Prophet (pbuh) showed the highest form of generosity in knowledge, in his wealth, and in his life for the sake of his ummah. He taught his followers different kinds of generosity through his actions such as conveying the religion of Allah, giving advice to the illiterate, feeding the hungry, taking care of the needs of the deprived, and enduring the troubles of the people. Abdullah b. Abbas (r.a.) talks about the generosity of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) as follows:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was the most generous of people in charity, but he was generous to the utmost in the month of Ramadan. Gabriel (pbuh) would meet him every year during the month of Ramadan until it ended, and Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) recited to him the Qur’an; and when Gabriel met him Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was most generous in giving charity like the blowing wind.” (Muslim, Fadail, 50)

Mawlana Khalid al-Baghdadi (q.s.) makes the following statements about the generosity of the Prophet (pbuh):

“He (pbuh) was such a great generous person that because of the generosity which came forth from his existence, a pearl comes out from the seas; a ruby comes out from hard rock; and a rose comes out from the thorns. If his good morals are talked about in a garden, you cannot see a single bud which does not smile or transform into a rose.” (*Diwan*, p. 65-66)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would not want to keep extra property in his possession and would donate the things that were more than needed. In fact, once Umar (r.a.), who informed us in this respect, entered his son’s house and joined him for a meal. When he noticed a taste of oil in addition to a taste of fat in the meal, he said: “these two never came together on the table of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He would eat one and give the other one as charity.” And he refused to eat the meal. (Ibn Majah, at’imah, 57)

When something was asked from the Prophet (pbuh), he would never say “I do not have it.” (Bukhari, Adab, 39) Hasan b. Thabit (r.a.) praised the Prophet (pbuh) and tried to explain this side of him in one of his poems as follows:

مَا قَالَ لَا قَطُّ إِلَّا فِي تَشْهَدِهِ لَوْلَا التَّشَهُدُ لَمْ يُسْمَعْ لَهُ لَاءٌ

“He would never say “لا” or “No” except in declaration of his faith.”⁶⁸ If it were not in the declaration of faith, the word “لا” or “No” would not be heard from him.” (Baghdadi, IX, 210)

When something was asked from the Prophet (pbuh) but if he did not have anything, he would borrow it and then give it to the needy. One day someone came to Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) and asked for something. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told him: *“I do not have anything with me to give you, go and buy something on my behalf. When my goods come, I will pay it.”* Umar, who was not content with putting Allah’s Messenger into hardship, said:

“O Messenger of Allah! If you have something with you, then you can give it in charity. Allah has not made you responsible for something you cannot afford.” The signs of discontentment from Umar’s words could be seen in the face of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh). Upon this a companion from Ansar said:

“May my mother and father be sacrificed for you O Messenger of Allah! Give. Do not be afraid for the owner of the universe would reduce His blessings.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was pleased to hear these words, smiled and said:

“I have been ordered to do so.” (Haythami, X, 242)

The generosity of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was far more than this. When he saw a needy who could not ask for anything because of their modesty, but their needs were obvious from their appearance, he would again help them as much as he could even if it was at the cost of borrowing. Bilal (r.a.) describes this characteristic of the Prophet as follows:

“When a Muslim man came to him and he found that he was in need, he would order me to help him. I would go, borrow some money, and purchase some food and clothes for him. Then I would clothe and feed him.” (Abu Dawud, Haraj, 33, 35)

The poet elegantly expresses the high level of the generosity of Allah’s Messenger as follows:

لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي كَفِّهِ غَيْرُ نَفْسِهِ
لَجَادَ بِهَا فَلَيَّتَقَ اللَّهُ سَائِلُهُ

68. * That is “I witness that there is no god but Allah.”



“If he did not have anything but his life; he would give it, too;

This is why the person who asks from him should fear Allah.”

Hasan b. Thabit describes the Prophet (pbuh) in one of his odes as: “Even at times of hardship which prevents generosity, he would generously give what he has, be it income or inheritance.” Perhaps the following lines of another poet best describe the Messenger of Allah:

مَنْ قَاسَ جَدْوَاكَ يَوْمًا بِالسُّحُبِ أَخْطَأَ مَدْحَكَ
السُّحُبُ تُعْطِي وَتَبْكِي وَأَنْتَ تُعْطِي وَتَضْحَكُ

“If someone likens you to the clouds in generosity, he makes a mistake in his praises. Because clouds give and cry, but you give and smile.”

When we learn his level of generosity, we can clearly understand why Allah the Almighty called him the most kind and merciful in the Holy Qur’an (al-Tawbah 9; 128). Our Prophet (pbuh), who carried endless mercy for all of humanity in his heart, always looked after the people around him and kindly helped those in need without hurting their feelings. We may see an example of his endless generosity and benevolence in one of his transactions with Jabir (r.a.). When they were returning from the Battle of Dhatur Riqā’ Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was chatting with Jabir (r.a.). During their conversation, the Prophet (pbuh) learned that Jabir (r.a.) was newly wedded and he owed people a lot of money. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked Jabir (r.a.) if he had any goods to sell. Jabir (r.a.) said that he had only a camel. Upon this Allah’s Messenger asked Jabir (r.a.) to sell the camel to him in order to relieve him from the burden of his loans. Jabir (r.a.) sold his camel on the condition that he would ride his camel until they reached Medina. When they arrived at Medina, Jabir (r.a.) went to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to deliver the camel. He, then, witnessed an incident, which made him very happy and amazed other people. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) both paid the camel’s price and gave the camel back to Jabir as a present. (Bukhari, Jihad, 49; Buyu’, 34; Muslim, Musakat, 109)

Jabir (r.a.) narrates that:

“When the Prophet (pbuh) paid my camel’s price and then gave it back to me, I met a Jew whom I had known. I told him about this incident. He was



astonished and he kept saying that “he really both paid the price and then gave the camel back to you?” And I told him “Yes, he did.”” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 303)

In that transaction, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) aimed to relieve Jabir (r.a.) from his burden and pretended like he was making a trade. He also gave Jabir (r.a.) more than the market price for his camel. This incident had such an impressive place in the hearts of the believers that that night has taken its place in the memories as “*laylat al-ba’ir*” or “the night of the camel.”

Here is another exemplary incident that shows the endless generosity of the Prophet (pbuh). Safwan b. Uyyaynah, one of the prominent members of Quraish, was with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in the battles of Hunain and Taif even though he had not been converted to Islam. When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was walking and checking around the war booty gathered in Jiranah, Safwan was with him. He was admiringly looking at the valley filled with camels, sheep, and shepherds. Allah’s Messenger was watching him and then asked Safwan:

“O Abu Wahb! Do you like this valley?” He replied:

“Yes, I do.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told him:

“Then this valley and everything in it are yours.” Upon this Safwan could not help saying that:

“Nobody’s heart except the prophets can be so generous.” And he converted to Islam by pronouncing the proclamation of faith (*shahadah*). (Waqidi, II, 854-55) Then he went back to Quraish and told them,

“O my people! Embrace Islam. By Allah, Muhammad donates so much without fearing to fall in need and poverty.” (Muslim, Fadail, 57-58)

It can be easily seen in the above mentioned examples how little wealth was worth for the Prophet (pbuh). He would not keep the wealth he had, be it a valley filled with riches or a single dirham as it was narrated by Bilal (r.a.), and he would not feel comfortable until donating it to a needy. (Abu Dawud, Haraj, 33, 35) In Bilal’s report, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not even want to hold two dirhams that he had and said that he was going to stay in the mosque and was not going home until donating them to people. Because he could not find needy people to accept his donation, he stayed in the mosque for two days. (Ibn Hibban, XIV, 262-264)





Allah's Messenger (pbuh) warned his companions whenever he felt a weakness in their feelings of benevolence and encouraged them to be generous. One day the Prophet (pbuh) went to the land of the sons of Amr b. Awf. He said:

"O the community of Ansar!" They replied:

"O Messenger of Allah! Tell us what is it?"

"You were placing yourselves under heavy burden, giving to the needy, and helping the wayfarers even before you were worshipping Allah in the Age of Ignorance. Have you begun to put and protect your wealth in castles after Allah gave you Islam and His Messenger? There are spiritual rewards for the sons of Adam because of what the animals and birds eat."

Upon this, the sons of Awf stood and immediately went to their date gardens and each one of them opened thirty gates on the wall around their gardens. (Hakim, IV, 148) It was because Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

"Say: Verily my Lord enlarges and restricts the Sustenance to such of His servants as He pleases: and nothing do you spend in the least (in His Cause) but He replaces it: for He is the Best of those who grant Sustenance." (Saba' 34; 39)

Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all), whom Allah's Messenger (pbuh) presented to us as guiding stars to follow, manifested many exemplary and magnificent deeds in respect to generosity. Uqba b. Amr (r.a.) says that:

"When the verses of charity were revealed, we used to work as porters and give our earnings as charity. A man came and distributed objects of charity in abundance. And the hypocrites said, "He is showing off." And another man came and gave one *sa'* (a small measure of food grains) of dates; they said, "Allah is not in need of this small amount of charity." And then the Divine Revelation came: **"Those who slander such of the Believers as give themselves freely to (deeds of) Charity, as well as such as can find nothing to give except the fruits of their labor, and throw ridicule on them, Allah will throw back their ridicule on them: and they shall have a grievous penalty."** (al-Tawba 9; 79)" (Bukhari, Zakat, 10; Muslim, Zakat, 72)



From the different versions of this tradition we find out that the one who donated in abundance was Abdurrahman b. Awf (r.a.) He donated four thousand dirham, which was half of his wealth; While Abu Aqil al-Ansari was the one who donated only one *sa'* of dates. In return for two *sa'* of dates he had drawn water all night. He brought one of them to the Prophet (pbuh) for the sake of Allah and kept the other at home for his family. What hypocrites could not stand was that all companions, rich and poor, were willingly bringing half of their earnings or wealth to the Prophet (pbuh). Even though the amount of charity in the two incidents varies, the level of sacrifice was the same.

Ottoman civilization is also known as the “civilization of endowments” because of the generosity, hospitality, and benevolence of the Ottomans. Instead of leaving behind palaces, mansions, and wealth they left social institutions, like caravansaries, bath houses, mosques, fountains, madrasas, and dervish lodges, for the future generations. Thus, they put the seal of Islam on the lands where they lived. They generously spent their wealth for the happiness of humanity and they considered to serve the creation as to serve the Creator. Their feeling of benevolence was so advanced that they used to compete with each other to host their guests. The following experience of the famous Tunisian traveler Ibn Battuta, who travelled the entire Anatolia in the fourteenth century, is a remarkable example in this respect. While travelling in Anatolia, Ibn Battuta and his friends stopped at the city of Denizli, which was known at the time as Ladik:

“As we entered the city, we saw some people, who went out their shops and pulled the reins of our horses. Another group came and stopped them. They began to argue. Then their argument got worse and they took out their knives. We began to feel scared for we did not understand their language. We thought they were from the principality of Garmiyan known by banditry. And we began to feel concerned about our lives and possessions. Then Allah the Almighty sent us a man who went to pilgrimage and knew Arabic. I asked him what these people wanted. He told us that these men were *ahis* (a sufi group whose members are called *ahi* meaning brother). The first group was the disciples of Ahi Sinan and the second one were the followers of Ahi Duman. They were arguing because each group wanted to host us in their own lodge. It was impossible not to admire their hospitality. Finally, they agreed upon drawing lots and the winner was going to host us. Ahi Sinan’s dervishes won the drawing. When Ahi Sinan heard this, he came out to welcome us with some of his



disciples. We stayed in his lodge. They presented us all sorts of foods. After resting for a while, Ahi Sinan took us to the bath house and he personally served me. Three or four of his disciples were serving one of my friends. After taking a bath, they prepared another table for us. We listened to the recitation of the Qur'an and together we chanted the names of Allah. The following day we saw Ahi Duman's dervishes coming to take us to their lodge. There, too, we were met by all kinds of generosity." (Ibn Batuta, p. 305-306)

The following quotation from the Turkish poet Hâlide Nusret Zorlutuna's article, published in the *İslâm Mecmuası* in 1956 (no. 7, p. 21), about the Ottomans' perception of generosity is a nice example:

"In old times - in fact it is not so old, for about forty years ago – there were small, modest, and clean houses next to our great mansions. Low-income families, retirees, old people, widows, and orphans would peacefully and prosperously live in these houses. Yes, prosperously! Because, some of the supplies for the winter and for the month of Ramadan carried to the mansion by cars used to be secretly taken to these little houses. In order to protect the self-respect of those people, special attention was given to secrecy. Our grandmothers used to say: "The left hand should not know what the right hand gives." Like people do these days, they would not announce what they did by publishing the pictures of dressed up poor children.

Let's assume in a little house a young girl is getting married. The unseen hand of "the charitable organization" of the district, motivated by Islamic and humanitarian feelings, would immediately take action by itself. There was neither a president nor a vice president or secretary of this organization. Because, they were not "volunteers in appearance" but "volunteers in essence." Serving the servants of Allah for His sake and relieving them from their burdens, and achieving their happiness and welfare were their only object. These unseen hands, which acted secretly by themselves, would disappear as soon as their job was done. Meanwhile, the orphan girl of the district would be married in a wedding ceremony just like the ceremony of a girl with living parents.

New mothers, the sick, and families of the deceased would be taken care of – and always with its solemn secrecy – by this organization. Additionally, it would always bring in time the provisions for the poor families and *eid* (holiday) attires for their children in the month of Ramadan..."

As seen in those examples, generosity is one of the most significant characteristics of a Muslim. It is impossible to imagine for a believer not to be generous, because faith and stinginess can never come together in the same heart. The following narration of Anas (r.a.) expresses the same point:

“A man had died. Someone said loudly as Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) could hear: “May Paradise be a blessing for him!” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked: *“How do you know (that he will be in Paradise)? Maybe he had spoken useless and meaningless talks or maybe he had shown stinginess even in so small amounts that would not decrease his wealth.”* (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 11)

In another saying, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) informed us about the sorrowful end of the meager both in this world and the Hereafter. Jabir b. Abdullah reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said: *“Be on your guard against committing oppression, for oppression is a darkness on the Day of Resurrection, and be on your guard against stinginess for stinginess destroyed those who were before you, as it incited them to shed blood and make lawful what was unlawful for them.”* (Muslim, Birr, 11.) For this reason, if stinginess exists in a believer’s nature, he/she should do everything to abandon it and replace it with generosity; because generosity is one of the qualities which will be most beneficial in the afterlife. Generosity constitutes the spirit of alms and charity. Disciplining the inner self can also be possible through generosity. The ways to achieve this are to make donations even in times of need, to forgive those who oppressed, and to show patience before the situations which are not liked, thinking of its rewards in the Hereafter.

Generosity is one of the most important parts of praised morality, which is necessary for the soundness of our personal and social life both in this world and in the Hereafter. As it was stated by Imam Ghazali: “Contentment not greed should be the character of those who do not have much wealth; while, generosity not stinginess should be the quality of the wealthy.”

K. His Gratitude

“And when your Lord proclaimed: If you give thanks, I will give you more...”

(Ibrahim 14; 7)

Gratitude means showing respect and thankfulness to someone for his/her help through actions, words, or thoughts.





Gratitude through words happens by remembering the helper and praising him/her and fulfilling other verbal actions which can be done.

Gratitude through actions means to employ the body and the limbs in the direction of Allah's contentment. In other words, everybody should protect and help the servants of Allah in the extent of their power and share his wealth with them.

Gratitude of the heart means to know who has given these blessings and to acknowledge His existence.

Junaid al-Baghdadi was taken to pilgrimage by his maternal uncle Sariy al-Sakati when he was seven years old. Gratitude was the topic in one of the scholarly gatherings inside Haram. After everybody in the gathering presented their view, they asked Sariy Sakati to explain his. Sariy turned to Junaid and asked him to speak. After thinking a while Junaid gave the following magnificent answer:

"Gratitude is not to rebel against Allah the Almighty by using the blessings which are bestowed by Him and not to make these blessings a capital for the sinful acts." (Attar, p. 318)

In a heart where certainty settles and achieves perfection, many great spiritual states manifest themselves. Gratitude is the natural result of this station. Someone who reaches the station of gratitude sees all blessings, hidden and open, which come from Allah the Almighty. Consequently, his love for his Lord increases and he realizes that he is incapable of properly thanking Him.

Knowing the value of kindness, feeling thankfulness to its doer, remembering its doer and praising him are all good manners resulting from gratitude. The following incident is a great example to show us how great the gratitude of Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was towards the people who had done something kind to him no matter how little it had been.

Muhammad b. Maslama narrates:

"One day we were with Allah's Messenger (pbuh). He said to Hasan b. Thabit (r.a.):

"O Hasan! Could you please recite for us an ode from the Age of Ignorance, which is not prohibited by Allah." He recited a poem from A'sha', in which he was satirizing Alqamah b. Ulatha. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said:



“O Hasan! Do not recite this poem in my assembly again.” Hasan expressed his confusion saying:

“O Messenger of Allah! Do you prohibit for me from satirizing a polytheist who is with Kaiser?” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) replied:

“O Hasan! The one who thanks people most will be the one who thanks Allah the Almighty most. Kaiser once asked Abu Sufyan about me. He did not say nice things about me, but when Kaiser asked the same question to Alqamah, he said very nice things about me.”

Thus, the Prophet (pbuh) expressed his gratitude towards Alqamah. (Ali al-Muttaqi, III, 738-739)

The following narration of Aisha (r.a.) shows how important thanking people is:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) often told me:

“O Aisha! Could you read some of the couplets that you have memorized?” And I used to tell him saying:

“Which couplets would you like? I know a lot of couplets by memory.” He then would say:

“From the ones about gratitude.” Once I said “May my mother and father be sacrificed for you. A poet said this and that.” And then I recited a poem about the kindness of thanking the goodness of people. Upon this Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told me:

“O Aisha! As Gabriel informed me, when Allah the Almighty resurrects the creation, He will ask the person who had received goodness from others:

“Did you thank the one who had done a favor to you?” And he will reply:

“O Lord! I thanked You for I know that all goodness comes from You.” But Allah the Almighty will tell him:

“You will not properly thank Me as long as you do not thank the person who had done the favor to you.” (Ali al-Muttaqi, III, 741-42)

If thankfulness is stated only by tongue and heart, then it would be incomplete. A complete gratitude can be achieved by the action. As Allah the Almighty created everything with a purpose and wisdom, He bestows His



blessings for a purpose. Blessings given to human beings, such as life, faith, and health, are all for the purpose of thanking Allah and serving on His path. The following verse proves this:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ
السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that haply you might give thanks.” (al-Nahl 16; 78) Allah the Almighty has given humans heads and in return asked from them to prostrate to show their thankfulness. He has bestowed upon them legs and requested service and worship as their manifestation of thankfulness.

Gratitude is also a moral quality, which expresses servant’s manners and respect towards Allah the Almighty and elevates the servant’s value in the presence of his Lord. However, people who have such feelings are very few. In this respect, Allah the Almighty says in the Qur’an:

“...Give thanks, O house of David! Few of My bondmen are thankful.” (Saba’ 34; 13) Because, human beings are such creations that easily forget and tend towards this world.

Human beings should be in great effort and endeavor in order to attain such nice attributes as patience and gratitude. How elegantly Rumi (q.s.) states this in the following lines:

“The ass, your fleshly soul, has gone off; tie it to a peg. How long will it run away from work and burden, how long? It must bear the burden of patience and thanksgiving, whether for a hundred years or for thirty or twenty. None that is laden supported another’s load; none reaped until he sowed something.” (Mathnawi, II, verses: 729-731) *“In (the view of) reason it is necessary to give thanks to the Benefactor; otherwise, the door of everlasting wrath will be opened.”* (Mathnawi, III, 2670)

In reality, Allah the Almighty does not need anybody’s gratitude. His Divineness, Might, and Sovereignty, neither ascends as a result of someone’s thankfulness nor descends because of someone’s disbelief. On the contrary, He



is the Ruler of everything. Allah the Almighty expresses this fact through the words of Solomon (pbuh) in the Qur'an:

“Whosoever gives thanks he only gives thanks for (the good of) his own soul: and whosoever is ungrateful (is ungrateful only to his own soul’s hurt). For lo! My Lord is Absolute in independence, Bountiful.”

(al-Naml 27; 40)

Great blessings and closeness to Allah are bestowed upon those who thank Allah; while beauty, skills, and abilities will be taken from those who do not thank Him. These will be taken from them to such an extent that there will be no signs of these good manners left in them.

In his every act and behavior Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was in a state of thankfulness. Aisha (r.a.) reported this attribute of the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

“The Prophet used to offer prayer at night for such a long time that his feet used to swell. I said to him:

“O Allah’s Apostle! Why do you do it whereas Allah has forgiven all your faults of the past and those to follow?” He said,

“Shouldn’t I love to be a thankful servant of Allah?” (Bukhari, Tafsir, 48/2)

With this saying, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) expresses that the blessings of Allah the Almighty should be regarded as a reason to increase thankfulness to Allah and to not show a decrease the acts of servitude. No matter how few the servants’ sins are, proper manifestation of gratitude for the endless Divine bounties is above human capacity. For this reason, repentance and being aware of one’s weakness are the requirements of servitude. Thus, a person can increase his thankfulness and come closer to Allah the Almighty by continuing the acts of worship. In this respect, Rumi (q.s.) elegantly becomes an interpreter to the lofty feelings of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in the following lines:

“Thanksgiving for the bounty is sweeter than the bounty (itself): how should he that is addicted to thanksgiving go towards (direct his attention to) the bounty? Thanksgiving is the soul of the bounty, and the bounty is as the husk, because thanksgiving brings you to the abode of the Beloved. Bounty produces heedlessness, and thanksgiving alertness: hunt after bounty with the snare of thanksgiving to the King.” (Mathnawi, III, verses: 2895-2897)





Ali (r.a.) said in this regard:

“Some people worship expecting something in return. This is the servitude of a merchant. Some others worship because of their fear and this is the servitude of slaves. And some others worship for thankfulness and this is the servitude of distinguished people.”

Allah the Almighty informs us how He will reward His thanking servants in the following verse:

“...If any do desire a reward in this life, we shall give it to him; and if any do desire a reward in the Hereafter, we shall give it to him. And swiftly shall we reward those that (serve us with) gratitude.” (Al-i Imran 3; 145)

Humans usually incline to become cruel, unfair, and oppress others, when they gain power and wealth; while, thankfulness is one of the good manners that protect them from unruliness; because, thankfulness is the effort to prevent conceit, extremism, and consequently cessation of the blessings. Thanking servants know that all their wealth are the blessings of Allah the Almighty and they are ordered to use these blessings according to Divine Will. The basis of modesty and maturity of the prophets whom great wealth, power, and authority were given, like David and Solomon, is this principle of faith. The real reason for the sorrowful end of Qarun, who went astray because of his wealth, was his deprivation from this understanding and absence of his thankfulness.⁶⁹

If a believer can prove through showing his gratitude that he will not transgress, boast, and get spoiled because of his wealth, Allah the Almighty will bestow upon him more blessings. The next verse expresses this point:

“... If you are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you; but if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed.” (Ibrahim 14; 7)

This is why the Prophet (pbuh) mentions that a thankful heart is among the greatest blessings given to a human being. Thawban (r.a.) narrates that:

69. Qarun, who is talked about in the chapter of al-Qasas in the Qur'an (28; 76-82), had been a righteous person before, but then he ruined his eternal life because of his heedlessness and disobedience. Allah the Almighty caused the earth to swallow him up and his wealth for which he had been bragging. Whatever the servants' spiritual station, state, and superiority are, their inner selves always lie in ambush and, as soon as it gets a chance, it may ruin their souls.



“When the verse *“...and (as for) those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah’s way, announce to them a painful chastisement”* (al-Tawba 9; 34) was revealed, we were on an expedition with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Some companions said “the ruling about gold and silver has been sent (so we will no longer save them). We wish we would know which wealth was more valuable, so we could save that.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told them:

“The most superior possessions are a tongue that praises Allah, a thankful heart, and a righteous wife who helps her husband’s faith.” (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 9/9)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would tell his companions that they were going to be questioned for even a single meal that they had after days of hunger and that they should be thankful to Allah the Almighty for His blessing. To some extent the following lines of a poet explain the feelings of the Prophet (pbuh):

Some people complain about the thorns of the roses
Whereas I thank that thorns have roses.⁷⁰

Whenever Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) saw that others did not have such blessings that were bestowed upon him, he would immediately thank Allah. Once he was visiting a crippled and when saw his condition, he immediately got down from his ride and prostrated in gratitude. (Haythami, II, 289) Appreciating the kindness and being thankful for it are the characteristics of mature person.

It is narrated by Sa’d b. AbuWaqqas:

“We set out with the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) from Mecca to go to Medina. When we were near Azwara, he got down from his ride, then raised his hands, and made supplication to Allah for some time, after which he prostrated himself, remaining for a long time in prostration. Then, he stood up and raised his hands for some time, after which he prostrated himself, remaining for a long time in prostration. He repeated this three times.

He then said:

70. In other words “you should not complain about the thorns of the roses but be thankful to Allah for His creation of the rose among the thorns.”





“I begged my Lord and asked for intercession for my people, and He gave me a third of my people, so I prostrated myself in gratitude to my Lord. Then I raised my head and begged my Lord for my people, and He gave me a third of my people, so I prostrated myself in gratitude to my Lord. Then I raised my head and begged my Lord for my people and He gave me the remaining third, so I prostrated myself again in gratitude to my Lord.” (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 162)

Every blessing which results in happiness and any sadness which one overcomes requires an expression of gratitude. As a matter of fact, as stated by Sa’di Shirazi, we owe two thanks for every breath we take, one for the breath we inhale and one for the one we exhale. Since we will not be able to do that, at least, in addition to the obligatory acts of worship, we should continue to perform the supererogatory ones observed by the Prophet (pbuh). Moreover, we should prostrate ourselves in gratitude when we attain a blessing or we are saved from a trouble, thus we should present our servitude and appreciation. In such times charities given to the needy become the statements of mercy just like the prayers performed for the sake of Allah.

Abdurrahman b. Awf (r.a.) narrates another incident manifesting the thankfulness of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to the blessings of Allah the Almighty:

“One time the Prophet (pbuh) went out the mosque. I secretly followed him. He went into a date grove. He turned towards the *qiblah* and prostrated himself. He prolonged his prostration so much that I thought he passed away. I went next to him and looked at his face. He raised his head and asked:

“O Abdurrahman! What is the matter?” I replied:

“O Messenger of Allah! You extended your prostration so long that I was worried that you passed away, so I came to you.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“When I went into the garden, I met Gabriel. He heralded me that Allah the Almighty had said: ‘whoever greets you (says salaam to you), I will bestow upon him peace and well-being. Whoever says his prayers upon you, I will pronounce prayers upon him.’” (This is why I went down to prostration.) (Hakim, I, 344)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) increased his thanks and gratitude to Allah the Almighty after the conquest of Mecca. Aisha (r.a.) reported that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) began to often recite these words:



سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

“Hallowed be Allah and with His praise, I seek the forgiveness of Allah and return to Him.”

When Aisha (r.a.) asked the reason for this the Prophet (pbuh) explained:

“My Lord informed me that I would soon see a sign in my Ummah, and He ordered me to recite these words often when I see it. Indeed I saw that sign.” (Muslim, Salat, 220)

This state of the Messenger of Allah teaches us that thankfulness and praising Allah is the peak of service to Allah.

We cannot finish counting the blessings of our Lord upon us. This is why the following statements of Rumi (q.s.) is very important to share: *“Praises be unto You, O Allah! You did suddenly put me afar from sorrow. If the tip of every hair of me should gain a tongue (power to speak), (yet) the thanks due to Yee are inexpressible.”* (Mathnawi, V, verses: 2314-2315)

L. His Devotion and Faithfulness

Loyalty means to not forget the favors received and to keep responding to them with favors either equal or better than it in return. Loyalty is the source of friendship, the first destination of love, and the most important basis of trust. It is the sign of complete and perfect faith and submission to Allah. Ingratitude is the opposite of loyalty and it means to not appreciate the favors and respond it with badness.

Moral qualities such as sincerity, devotion, and modesty, exist in the foundation of loyalty. Loyalty is an endless sea and a rare covenant.

The greatest loyalty for a servant is to know his Creator, fulfill his responsibilities of servitude, and appreciate the blessings given by his Creator; whereas, the greatest ingratitude of a servant is to deny his Lord and to not acknowledge His Exaltedness.

The peak of loyalty was manifested in the life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Saying that, *“I am the supplication of my father Abraham, good news*



of my brother Jesus, and dream of my mother Aminah”⁷¹ (Hakim, II, 453) Allah’s Messenger remembered Abraham, Jesus (peace and blessings be upon all of them), and his mother Aminah with gratitude. He also made the reciting of Abraham’s supplication a custom for his followers till the Last Day. Remembering the family of Prophet Abraham after the family of Prophet Muhammad in the supplications of “*Salli and Barik*”, which are recited in every prayer, is the result of this elegant sense of loyalty.

Another incident which shows the loyalty of the Prophet as a son occurred on his way to Mecca to perform the minor pilgrimage of Hudaibiyah. They passed by Abwa on their way. Allah’s Messenger visited his mother’s grave with the permission from Allah the Almighty. During his visit, he straightened his mother’s grave with his hands and cried from his grief. Muslims, who saw him crying, began to cry, too. Then they asked the reason for his sadness and he (pbuh) replied: “*I cried, because I remembered my mother’s kindness and compassion.*” (Ibn Sa’d, I, 116-17; see also Muslim, Janaiz, 105-108)

After the Prophet (pbuh) had lost his caring and loving mother at a very young age, first his grandfather and then his paternal uncle took him under their protection. His uncle’s wife Fatima looked after him as well. She did not discriminate him from her own children and she even held him dearer. When this lady passed away after she migrated to Medina as a Muslim, Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said that, “*my mother passed away.*” He shrouded her with his own shirt and then lied down for a while in her grave to let her get used to the grave. When he was told that “O Messenger of Allah! It looks like you have become really sad for Fatima’s death,” he said:

“*She was my mother. She would feed me while her own children were waiting hungry; she would clean me up first while her own children were waiting in dirt and dust. She was my mother.*” (Ya’qubi, II, 14)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) really would have liked that his Uncle Abu Talib converted to Islam. He tried to convince his uncle for conversion several times. His efforts at the time of his uncle’s death bed are very famous. It was

71. Abraham (pbuh) sincerely made the following supplication for the Prophet (pbuh): “**Our Lord! send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall rehearse Your Signs to them and instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom, and sanctify them ...**” (al-Baqarah 2; 129) Jesus (pbuh) gave the glad tidings of a Messenger who was going to come after him. (al-Saff 61; 6) Our mother Aminah, on the other hand, saw in her dream that a light was coming out of her and enlightening the whole world. (Ibn Sa’d, I, 102)

very saddening for the Prophet (pbuh) to see someone who had done so many great services for Islam not to accept Islam. When Abu Talib passed away, Ali (r.a.) came to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and said: "your old uncle died as an unbeliever in a state of astray." The Prophet (pbuh) became so sad from hearing this news that he began to cry. And then he said: "*go, wash, and bury him.*" (Nasai, Janaiz, 84; Diyarbekri, I, 301) His grief was not emerging just from his efforts to convey the message of Islam but also from his feeling of indebtedness towards his uncle.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) never forgot those who had done favors for him and he showed his loyalty and gratitude towards them for his entire life. His loyalty especially to his first wife Khadijah reached a matchless dimension. His nanny Ummu Ayman, who also breastfed him for a week, his wet-nurse Halimah, Halimah's daughter (his sister from breastfeeding) Shayma were among the lucky people who witnessed his loyalty. The Prophet (pbuh) respected them highly and did everything he could to help fulfill their needs. (Ibn Sa'd, I, 113-114)

As soon as Allah's Messenger (pbuh) saw his sister Shayma among the prisoners of war in the Battle of Hawazin, he recognized her. He immediately gave them valuable presents and then sent her and her relatives back to their town. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) even thought about giving back the war booty which was taken from them just because of the four years which he had spent with his wet-nursing aunts from the tribe of Hawazin. However, people from Hawazin were late to make their requests and because of the insistence of the bedouins in the Muslim army Allah's Messenger (pbuh) had to distribute the war booty gathered in Jiranah. Later, upon the request from the tribe of Hawazin the Prophet (pbuh) freed the captives who fell into his and his family's share and companions did the same and they also did not request ransom money. (Ibn Hisham, IV, 135) Because of the Prophet's loyalty to his relatives, thousands of people attained their freedom and opened their hearts to the truth.

After the prophetic mission given to Allah's Messenger (pbuh), he endured all kinds of pain and affliction but continued to convey the message of Islam. On his way back from Taif his enemies wanted to prevent his entrance to Mecca. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked for protection from many notables of Mecca, but every one of them refused. Only Mut'im b. Adiyy accepted and helped Allah's Messenger (pbuh) enter the city under the protection of



his fully armed sons. Years passed after this incident. Mut'im fought against Muslims in the Battle of Badr and got killed. Hasan b. Thabit, one of the poets of the Prophet, wrote an elegy for him which stated his protection of the Messenger of Allah, and kindly remembered him. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) became very happy for the loyalty shown on his behalf. Then the Prophet (pbuh) talked about the war prisoners of Badr saying: *"Had Al-Mutim bin Adi been alive and interceded with me for these captives, I would have freed them for his sake without even asking ransom from them."* (Bukhari, Humus, 16; Ibn Hisham, I, 404-406)

During the season of pilgrimage Allah's Messenger (pbuh) used to try to convey the message of Islam in fairs and face all kinds of difficulties, hardships, and tortures. Just like many other tribes he invited the tribe of the sons of Amir b. Sa'saa to accept Islam. When he mounted on his camel, one of them named Bayharah poked a stick at the Prophet's camel. The animal jumped with pain and the Prophet (pbuh) fell down. Seeing the insult done to the Messenger of Allah a Muslim lady named Dubaa bint Amir said that: "O Amir family! Isn't there anybody amongst you, who can help the Messenger of Allah for my sake after seeing what happened to him?" Three of her uncle's sons immediately stood up and walked towards Bayhara. From then on Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prayed for those people saying:

"O Allah! Please bestow your blessings upon them." As a result of these prayers Allah the Almighty honored them with faith and then with the rank of martyrdom. (Ibn hajar, *al-Isabah*, IV, 353)

The Prophet's devotion and loyalty comprised everybody. However, he would show special countenance and love to those who were serving the mission of Islam. A black person who used to clean the Mosque had died. The Prophet (pbuh) did not know about it. One day the Prophet remembered him and said, "What happened to that person?" The people replied, "O Allah's Apostle! He died." He said, "Why did you not inform me?" They said, "His story was so and so (i.e. regarded him as insignificant)." He said, "Show me his grave." He then went to his grave and offered the funeral prayer. (Bukhari, Janaiz, 67)

Similarly, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would never forget those who died as martyrs on the path of Allah. He would personally pay special attention to education and bringing up their children and do everything he could to help

their wives. He would encourage his companions to do the same. Two of the countless examples in this regard are as follows:

When the Prophet (pbuh) was turning back from the minor pilgrimage of Hdaybiyah, Umamah, Hamza's (r.a.) little daughter, who was among the martyrs of Uhud, told him: "O Uncle! Where are you going and leaving me here?" Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) took her with him to Medina. When he asked his companions who would foster her, three of them volunteered. The first one was Zayd b. Haritha (r.a.), whom the Prophet (pbuh) declared to be the brother of Hamzah (r.a.) after migrating to Medina. The second one was Ali (r.a.) who could be considered as Umamah's uncle. And the third one was Ja'far b. Abu Talib (r.a.) who was a close relative of Umamah just like Ali (r.a.). The only difference was that his wife was Umamah's aunt. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was deeply moved by this close attention to the daughter of a martyr. He complimented all three of them:

"O Zayd! You are a friend of Allah and His Messenger. O Ali! You are my brother and friend. O Ja'far! You are the closest one to me in character and morality." Then he entrusted Umamah to Ja'far because of his marriage with Umamah's aunt. Later, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) cared for Umamah in every stage of her life and married her with Ummu Salamah's son Salah at its appropriate time. (Bukhari, Maghazi, 43; Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 159)

In the Battle of Mu'tah three commanders, Zayd b. Haritha, Ja'far b. Abu Talib, and Abdullah b. Rawaha, died consecutively as martyrs. After the war when the Muslim army came back to Medina, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) and Medinans cried after their martyrs. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prohibited believers from lamenting excessively and bawling. He ordered instead to take food to the martyrs' houses. He especially enjoined their orphans to be taken care of. In this matter, he manifested the best examples to his followers. He went to Ja'far's family to express his condolences and sent food to their house for three days. He also took their children under his protection from that day on. (Ibn Hisham, III, 436)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was appreciative not only to those who had done a favor for him but also to those who one way or another assisted Islam or his companions. He showed his gratefulness towards such people as occasion served.





Years had passed after the migration to Abyssinia. Delegates of the ruler of Abyssinia came to the Prophet (pbuh). Allah's Messenger (pbuh) paid close attention to them; he even served them personally. When companions told him that they could do the service, he gave them the following meaningful answer: *"These are the ones who gave my companions who migrated to Abyssinia a place to stay and offered them food and drink. Now in return I would like to serve them."* (Bayhaki, *Shuab al-Iman*, VI, 518; VII, 436)

The Prophet's gratitude towards Abyssinia continued later in his life. Even though there was a sea between the two countries and travel by land took several days, Allah's Messenger informed his companions about the Abyssinian ruler Najashi's death on the same day and said:

"Perform the funeral prayer of your brother who passed away in a far-away land. When the companions asked: "O Messenger of Allah! Who is that man?" He replied:

"He is Najashi Ashama! There died today the pious servant of Allah, Ashama. Ask forgiveness from Allah for your brother." Then he stood up and led us in (funeral prayer) for him. (Muslim, *Janaiz*, 62-68; Ibn Hanbal, IV, 7)

When his sickness got worse and he was on his deathbed, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) came to the mosque to see his companions. The mosque was swarming with believers. Allah's beloved Messenger (pbuh) had done his mission and showed many of them the right path. Seeing such a big crowd in the mosque, which was the result of his efforts, made him really happy. He could leave this world satisfied with the results of his work; however, there were those companions who had become martyrs on the path of conveying the message of Islam who had not been able to join the crowd. Allah's Apostle (pbuh) never forgot them. From time to time he would go to the cemeteries and pray for them. He did the same in his final speech. The companion narrating this incident stated that:

"After the Prophet (pbuh) pronounced the declaration of faith (*kalima al-shahadah*), he said:

"O people! For His blessings, I thank Allah that there is no god but Him." And then he asked forgiveness for the martyrs of Uhud as he always did. (Ibn Sa'd, II, 228, 251)



Allah's Messenger (pbuh) then said showing his loyalty to the Medinan Muslims (*Ansar*):

"O people! The people will go on increasing, but the Ansar will go on decreasing till they become just like salt in a meal. So whoever amongst you will be the ruler and have the power to harm or benefit others, should accept the good of the good-doers amongst them and excuse the wrong-doers amongst them." (Bukhari, Manqib al-Ansar, 11)

"I request you to take care of the Ansar as they are my near companions to whom I confided my private secrets. They have fulfilled their obligations and rights which were enjoined on them but there remains what is for them. So, accept the good of the good-doers amongst them and excuse the wrongdoers amongst them." (Bukhari, Manaqib al-Ansar, 10)

After this speech, the Prophet (pbuh) did not go up the pulpit again. He left this world with his mind at ease for fulfilling his job and entrusting his friends from Ansar to his ummah.

Examples showing the Prophet's loyalty towards those heroic people are countless. When Mecca was conquered, the Ansar became very sad because they thought that the Prophet (pbuh) might leave them and stay in Mecca; but Allah's Messenger chose them and came back to Medina.

Our Prophet (pbuh) did not forget the sacrifices of the Meccan believers (*Muhajirs*), either. Especially, Abu Bakr (r.a.) who had a special place for him.

Abu Bakr announced, "Whoever was promised by the Prophet should come to us." (Ibn Sa'd, II, 318; Bukhari, Kafala, 3)

Allah the Almighty places tranquility into the hearts of loyal servants and purifies their essence. He renews His Blessings to such servants whenever His blessings are exhausted. Rumi (q.s.) says in this respect:

"The people who have been loyal to others are given superiority over all (other) sorts (of men). Seas and mountains are made subject to them; the four elements⁷² also are the slaves of that class." (Mathnawi, V, verses: 1192-1193)

72. These four elements are air, water, earth, and fire which constitute the essence of creation.



M. His Calmness and Dignity

Dignity means calmness, equanimity, and protecting pride, honor, and self-esteem. Dignity, which also means clemency and loftiness, is the opposite of frivolity. Dignity is a very important characteristic just as much as the badness of vanity. However, it should not be forgotten that showing dignity does not mean to be a scowling, difficult, and quarrelsome person. Dignity is the point of balance between vanity and despicability.

Calmness, on the other hand, entails self-possession, sobriety, reliability, constancy, and solemnity. It is the state of peacefulness after cessation of excitement and panic. This state can also be expressed as quietude.

It is stated in the following verse that dignity in its perfect sense is an attribute belonging to Allah: **“What is the matter with you that you hope not toward Allah for dignity?”** (Nuh, 71; 13)

Allah the Almighty calls human beings to be afraid of His Divine Existence, to believe in His Patience as much as His Majesty, and to not disrespect Him. If they follow all these orders, then Allah the Almighty will bestow upon them dignity and calmness and have them attain high rankings.

Another meaning of dignity is to show the proper respect to Allah and His Messenger (pbuh). One of the duties of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was to teach people how to show their dignity before Allah and His Messenger. This is expressed in a verse as follows:

“We have truly sent you as a witness, as a bringer of Glad Tidings, and as a Warner: In order that you (O men) may believe in Allah and His Messenger, that you may assist and honor Him, and celebrate His praises morning and evening.” (al-Fath 48; 8-9)

This verse states that after having faith in Allah and His Messenger there is the requirement of showing respect and dignity towards them as well. Only in this way, can a dignified stance among humans be possible. Other acts and behaviors outside such a stance are doomed to be frivolous.

Dignity is such an attribute that is loved by everybody and it brings respect to its owner. Dignified people should not be conceited but, on the contrary, they are required to observe utmost modesty in their actions and behav-

ior. When modesty and dignity exist together, they form the perfect morality. The following verse defines how a Muslim's dignity needs to be:

“And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, Peace!” (al-Furqan 25; 63)

Dignity of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) attracted other people's respect and his modesty had him be loved by them. Our Prophet (pbuh) had the best morality among human beings. He would always act with dignity and calmness. He would never speak loudly and respond evil with evil. On the contrary, he would forgive and show mercy. (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 2) He would even order to go out to the mosque for prayer with dignity and calmness. It was narrated by Abdullah bin Abi Qatada (r.a.):

“My father said, “While we were praying with the Prophet (pbuh) he heard the noise of some people. After the prayer he asked:

“What is the matter?” They replied:

“We were hurrying for the prayer.” He told them:

“Do not make haste for the prayer. When you hear the Iqama, proceed to offer the prayer with calmness and solemnity and do not make haste. And whenever you come for the prayer, you should come with calmness, and pray whatever you get (with the imam and the congregation) and complete the rest which you have missed.” (Bukhari, Adhaan, 20-21)

Another incident was narrated by Ibn Abbas (r.a.)

“I proceeded along with the Prophet on the day of Arafat (ninth day of Dhul-Hijja). The Prophet heard a great hue and cry and the beating of camels behind him. So he beckoned to the people with his lash and invited them to calmness saying:

“O people! Be quiet. Hastening is not a sign of righteousness.” (Bukhari, Hajj, 94)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) did not lose his calmness and dignity even under most exasperating and irritating conditions. He would endure people's rudeness and treat them with gentleness. Anas (r.a.) narrated:





“While I was walking with the Prophet who was wearing a *Najrani* outer garment with a thick hem, a bedouin came upon the Prophet and pulled his garment so violently that I could recognize the impress of the hem on his shoulder caused by the severity of his pull. Then the bedouin said, “O Muhammad! Order your companions to give me something from Allah’s Fortune what Allah has given to you.” The Prophet turned to him and smiled, and ordered that a gift be given to him.” (Bukhari, Humus, 19)

Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) never hit a person, be it a woman or one of his servants, except during fighting for the sake of Allah. He would also not take revenge from anybody. He would punish people for the sake of Allah only when they violate the prohibitions of Allah. (Muslim, Fadail, 79)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was also careful about his actions and behaviors in congregation. A behavior contrary to dignity could not be seen from him. He would usually stay quiet and would not speak unless necessary. Abu Malik al-Ashjai’ narrated that his father had said that:

“When we were young, we would sit with the Messenger of Allah. I have not seen anybody who stays quiet longer than the Messenger of Allah. When his companions begin talking, he would just smile.” (Haythami, X, 298)

N. His Moderation

“Dignified good bearing and moderation in actions and behaviors are one of the twenty-five parts of prophethood.”

(Muwatta, Shaar, 17; Abu Dawud, Adab, 2)

Moderation means that quantity and in quality between two states is right, orderly, straight, and well-proportioned. It expresses balance, naturalness, steadiness, conformity, and vitality. Moderation means to follow the middle path instead of following one of the two extremes.

Islam orders its believers to follow moderation and prohibits extreme actions in every aspect of life, such as eating, dressing, and even worshipping. This is why the best of deeds is the most moderate one.

Allah the Almighty created the universe and all creation in a perfect balance and ordered His servants to behave in moderation. This is stated in a verse as follows:



وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ

“And the sky He hath uplifted; and He hath set the measure, that you may not exceed the measure.” (al-Rahman 55; 7-8)

Wahb b. Munabbih said that:

“Everything has two ends and a middle point. If one holds from one of these ends, the other one will be off-balance. However if one holds from the middle point, two ends will be in balance. Therefore try to hold everything from the middle.” (Haythami, VIII, 112)

There should be harmony in psychological and emotional facilities just like the balance and moderation in the outer world. This harmony depends on the balance of the three basic capabilities which constitute the foundation of the moral life. According to this principle, wisdom is born from the balanced operation of reason; chastity comes out from the balanced operation of the sexual desires; and bravery originates from the balanced usage of orientation of power and anger. Creation of these balances in the inner world of human beings gives rise to the fourth facility, i.e. justice, and in this way the perfect morality is achieved.

Allah the Almighty warns the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) even about his distress in conveying the message of Islam and invites him to act in moderation saying: **“We have not sent down The Qur’an to you to be (an occasion) for your distress...”** (Taha 20; 2) Again, Allah the Almighty orders to act in moderation in regards to benevolence as follows:

“Make not your hand tied to your neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that you become blameworthy and destitute.” (al-Isra 17; 29) Tying hands to the neck symbolizes stinginess and stretching it to its utmost reach represents wastefulness. In other words, believers should neither be stingy by tying their hands nor knowingly waste their belongings. They should find a middle path between them. Allah the Almighty praises such servants, calls them His true servants, and presents them as paradigms for the other servants as follow:

“Those (the true servants of the Beneficent Allah) who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes)” (al-Furqan 25; 67)



Satan tries to deceive people in two ways. It does not matter through which one of them he succeeds, for both of them carry the same result. One of them is exaggeration and the other one is laxness. Allah the Almighty wants easiness, which does not reach the level of laziness, for His servants. It is wrong to try to make the religion, which is relieved by Allah for His servants, difficult by using the name of Allah. Furthermore, nobody has such a right to do that.

According to the narration of Aisha (r.a.), the Prophet (pbuh) came in while she (r.a.) was sitting with a woman. He asked,

“Who is she?” Aisha (r.a.) replied,

“She is so and so,” and then told him about her excessive praying. He said disapprovingly,

“You do not need to count these acts. It is enough for you to perform your worship within your capacity; By Allah, He does not get tired as long as you do not get tired.” (Bukhari, Iman, 32)

In another saying, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated that:

“Do supererogatory deeds within your capacity; because the best act of Worship in the sight of Allah is that which is done regularly even if it is little.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 28)

Some of the companions came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet (pbuh) asking how the Prophet worshipped (Allah). So they narrated what they knew about the Prophet’s worship. Thinking that the Prophet’s moderate worship was insufficient, companions said,

“Where was he and where are we? And his past and future sins have been forgiven.” Then one of them said,

“I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever.” The other said,

“I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast.” The third said,

“I will keep away from the women and will not marry forever.” Allah’s Apostle came to them and said,

“Are you the same people who said so-and-so? I warn you! By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah, more afraid of Him, more respectful to Him than you are; yet I fast and break my fast, I do sleep and pray at night and I also marry

women. So he who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers).” (Bukhari, Nikah, 1)

Moderation in the Prophet’s deeds is a means of mercy for his ummah. Those who follow him in this respect will neither suffer a loss nor be criticized by others. People are not always able to perform many acts of worship. For this reason, it is left to the individual’s choice to perform as many acts of supererogatory acts of worship as he/she can. On the other hand, excessive acts of worship do not always show the high level of fear from Allah and strong religiosity.

What is prohibited by the Messenger of Allah in his saying is to transgress the limits of religion and incline towards a type of priesthood; because Islam does not allow priesthood. Allah the Almighty states in this respect:

“O you who believe! Do not forbid (yourselves) the good things which Allah has made lawful for you and do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits.” (Al-Maidah 5; 87)

The reason for the revelation of this verse is a nice measure for us in this regard. One day Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) talked about the signs of the Last Day to his companions. They were moved by this so much that they began to cry. Then ten of them gathered in Othman b. Muadh’s home. Ali and Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with them) were among them. As a result of their counseling they decided to abstain from the world, to be castrated, to fast during the day and spend the entire night praying, to not eat meat, to abstain from women, to not put on perfume and to not spend time with the beauties of the world. When the Prophet (pbuh) heard their decision, he went to Muadh’s home, but he could not find Muadh at home. He left a message with his wife that Othman and his friends should come and see him. So they went to see the Prophet. Allah’s Messenger told them the matters that they decided to do and asked:

“You have agreed upon these matters, haven’t you?” They replied:

“Yes, we have, O Messenger of Allah! We have no intention to take this decision except goodness.” Upon this Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“I certainly am not ordered to do these things. Of course your bodies have rights upon you. Fast some days and eat on other days. Both sleep and perform acts of worship during the nights. I sometimes sleep and sometimes pray during the night. Some days I fast and on some other day I do not fast.



I eat meat and sleep with my wives. Whoever does not follow my tradition is not from me (not one of my followers). ” Then he gathered his companions and made the following speech:

“What is the matter with some of the people that they prohibit themselves to sleep with their wives, to eat and drink, put on perfume, to sleep, and to enjoy the lawful pleasures of this world? I certainly do not command you to live a monastic life and be a priest. There is no such thing in my religion as not to eat meat, stay away from women, and abstain from the world. My followers’ journeys are fasting and their priesthood is to fight for the sake of Allah. Do not accept partners to Allah, perform your pilgrimages, observe your prayers, give your alms, and fast during the month of Ramadan. Be straight so those who follow you will be straight. People before you were destroyed for their extremities. They made their religion difficult for themselves. Allah made it difficult for them. Today what you see in the monasteries and churches are the descendants of those people.” (Wahidi, p. 207-208)

Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) emphasized the most important matters and pointed out guide marks, which would protect his ummah from going astray and attracting Allah’s anger like the earlier people had done. The following prophetic saying clearly expresses that moderate, intelligent, and continuous efforts are what people need to do in order to reach their goals:

“...Follow the middle path. Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately, and try to be close to Allah the Almighty. Exert yourselves in the forenoon and in the afternoon and during a part of the night, and Beware! Always adopt a middle, moderate, regular course whereby you will reach your target (Paradise). ” (Bukhari, Riqaq, 18) The Turkish poet Edirneli Hâtemî elegantly interprets this prophetic saying in his following lines:

Erişir menzîl-i maksûduna âheste giden

Tîz-reftâr olanın pâyine dâmen dolaşır.

“Those who act slowly and surely can easily reach their destination; while those who haste unnecessarily usually face obstacles and get agitated.”

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) attached so much importance on moderation that he ordered to be moderate even in performing prayers, which he loved so much and called “light of his eyes.” Once the Prophet (pbuh) entered the Mosque and saw a rope hanging in between its two pillars. He asked:

“What is this rope?” The people said,

“This rope is for Zainab bint Jahsh who, when she feels tired during her prayer, holds it to keep standing.” The Prophet ordered,

“Remove the rope immediately. You should pray as long as you feel active, and when you get tired, sit down or go to sleep.” (Bukhari, Tahajjud, 18)

Jabir b. Samura reported: “I used to pray with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and both his prayer and sermon were of moderate length.” (Muslim, Jum’a, 41-42)

A good Muslim is the one who abstains from exceeding limits and tries to be balanced and moderate in his words, actions, and behavior. Those who do not obey these principles not only face troubles in this world but also deserve penalties in the Hereafter. They will not be liked by other people. They become such people from whom everybody wants to stay away from. This is why Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) advised to be moderate in every aspect of life saying that: *“Ruined are those who rush into extremes into their words and behavior.”* (Muslim, ‘Ilm, 7)

One needs to be moderate in his anger and love, too. A person should neither exaggerate his love nor cut all his ties from the person he dislikes. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) explains the reason for this as follows:

أَحِبِّ حَبِيبَكَ هَوْنًا مَا، عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ بَغِيضَكَ يَوْمًا مَا
أَبْغَضَ بَغِيضَكَ هَوْنًا مَا، عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ حَبِيبَكَ يَوْمًا مَا

“Love your friend moderately for one day he might turn into an enemy.

Be easy in your anger against your enemy, for one day he might become your friend.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 60)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) disciplined his companions with this morality and presented them to all of humanity as perfect examples. Wahb b. Abdullah (r.a.) narrates:

“The Prophet made a bond of brotherhood between Salman and Abu Ad-Darda. Salman paid a visit to Abu Ad-Darda and found Umm al-Darda dressed in shabby clothes and asked her why she was in that state. She replied,





“Your brother Abu Ad-Darda is not interested in the possessions and pleasures of this world.”

In the meantime, Abu al-Darda came and prepared a meal for Salman. Salman requested Abu al-Darda to eat with him, but Abu al-Darda said,

“Please you go ahead, I am fasting.” Salman said,

“I am not going to eat unless you eat.” So, Abu al-Darda ate with his brother. When it was night and a part of the night passed, Abu al-Darda got up to offer the night prayer, but Salman told him to sleep and Abu al-Darda slept. After sometime, Abu al-Darda got up again but Salman told him to sleep. When it was the last hours of the night, Salman told him to get up then, and both of them offered the prayer. Salman told Abu al-Darda,

“Your Lord has a right on you, your soul has a right on you, and your family has a right on you; so you should give the rights of all those who has a right on you.” Abu al-Darda came to the Prophet and narrated the whole story. The Prophet said, “Salman has spoken the truth.” (Bukhari, Sawm, 51; Adab, 86)

As in this example, companions of the Prophet (pbuh) followed each other as examples and tried to live moderately. Those who were warned by their brother never got offended or upset. On the contrary, they accepted their mistakes and followed their Muslim brothers’ warnings. Subtlety of Salman’s (r.a.) intellect and Abu al-Darda’s (r.a.) other good characteristics, such as observing brotherhood, getting along with friends, and abiding the truth, are among the things that draw our attention in the above mentioned example.

In conclusion, we should neither expect a human being to be like an angel nor let them exceed the lawful limits. One should always be aware of his humanness and strive to do the good, abstain from evil, and always follow the middle path; because “*Dignified good bearing and moderation in actions and behaviors are one of the twenty-five parts of prophethood.*” (Muwatta, Shaar, 17; Abu Dawud, Adab, 2)

O. His Truthfulness (*Sidk*) and Straightforwardness (*Istiqamah*)

The Arabic word *sidk* means righteousness, trustworthiness, straightforwardness, and being within the limits of reason and religion. *Sidk* means compliance of the words with the mind and compliance of the information with the informed. Truthfulness must not only be in words but in intention, will, de-



termination, and action as well. Straightforwardness (*istiqamah*), on the other hand, is to stay on the right path and to live according to the commands. *Kidhb* or falsehood is the opposite of *sidk*. While opposite of *istiqamah* is crookedness, which means to leave the truth, to violate justice and what is right, and not to keep one's word.

Truthfulness is the most important basis of Islam and one of the loftiest characteristics of a believer. It is the strongest handle to hold for salvation. Therefore, we need to revive truthfulness in our inner worlds, which is the foundation of our social life, and treat our spiritual illnesses through it.

Islam gives an exceptional importance for being righteous, not telling lies, and being straightforward. Truthfulness is the first and foremost characteristic of a righteous believer.

"Truthfulness" and "straightforwardness" are two spiritual qualities that combine other moral qualities. Those who believe in Allah, His angels, and His scriptures; and those who spend their possessions on their relatives, orphans, the poor, wayfarers, beggars, slaves and captives; and those who perform their ritual prayers, give their alms, keep their promises, and be patient are characterized as God-fearing and devout believers. They are also mentioned as the straightforward believers' common characteristic. (al-Baqara 2; 177 – al-Ahzab 33; 35) A believers' greatest ideal is also mentioned in the Qur'an as "*sirat al-mus-taqim*" or being on the straight path.

Allah the Almighty informed His Messenger (pbuh) which religion He had chosen for His servants and warned them in the following verse:

فَاسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَمَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

"Therefore stand firm (in the straight path) as you are commanded, you and those who with you turn (unto Allah); and transgress not (from the path): for he sees well all that you do." (Hud 11; 112) In other words, Allah the Almighty says: "O Prophet! You need to be a paradigm on the straight path for your ummah by living in accordance with the Qur'anic ethics and regulations so that there should remain no doubts about you. Do not listen to what infidels and polytheists say about you. Leave them to your Lord. Be straight in your actions, be they personal or public. No matter how hard performing your





duty might be do not be afraid of the obstacles before conveying, applying, and executing your duty. Your Lord is your Helper.” (Elmalılı, IV, 2829-2830)

Living a trustworthy life within the prescribed limits requires great seriousness, sensibility and effort. This is not an easy thing to do. In fact, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said in respect to the above mentioned verse: “*Surah Hud (chapter 11) made me older.*” (Tirmidhi, Tafsir, 56/6; Qurtubi, IX, 107)

Abdullah b. Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said in regards to this prophetic saying:

“There is no other commandment to the Prophet in the Qur’an harder than this one.” (Nawawi, *Sharhu Sahih-i Muslim*, II, 9)

Even though this verse is addressed to the Prophet (pbuh), he was not worried about his own straightforwardness; because his straightforwardness was divinely confirmed in the verse: “**(O Prophet) You are on a straight path.**” (Yasin 36; 4) What made him grow older was his worry about his ummah because the command in the verse comprised all the believers. As Esad Efendi explained:

“Those who are not on the straight path will perish, be they scholars or sufi masters. If your back did not become crooked from the weight of the straight path, would the arrow of desire hit the target of Divine nearness?” (*Diwan*, p. 27)

In another verse, Allah the Almighty warns His servants as follows:

“Verily, this is my way, leading straight: follow it: follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from his (great) path: thus does He command you, that you may be righteous.” (al-An’am 6; 153) Because regret felt in old ages might not be enough to clear a life full of mistakes. Life is a period of time long enough only to live a straight life.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was the most straightforward of all people. Even his most ferocious enemies, such as Abu Jahl, Ahnas b. Sharik, Nadr b. Harith, and Abu Sufyan, who later converted to Islam, had to confess this reality.⁷³ Never a word other than truth came out of his mouth. Even when he was telling a joke, he did not lie.

73. Bukhari, Bad’ul Wahy, 6; Muslim, Jihad, 74; Tabari, *Tafsir*, VII, 240; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya*, III, 113.



Allah's Apostle (pbuh), who lived his entire life on the straight path as commanded by Allah the Almighty, asked his ummah to be on the straight path and often emphasized the significance of this matter. He (pbuh) said that *"even if you will not be able to achieve fully, try to be straight as much as you can."*

It is narrated on the authority of Sufyan b. Abdullah al-Thaqafi that he said:

"I asked the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to tell me one thing about Islam which might dispense with the necessity of my asking anybody other than you. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) remarked:

قُلْ آمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ فَاسْتَقِمَّ

"Say I affirm my faith in Allah and then remain steadfast to it." (Muslim, Iman, 62)

One should first be honest with Allah the Almighty and be on the straight path. Before everything else he should be loyal to his covenant with Allah and be sincere in his feelings, thoughts, intentions, and words. We should also be very careful about our vows, words, and actions done in His name. In this respect, the Prophet (pbuh) taught and directed his companions. The following mentioned incident is related to this issue:

"Aisha (r.a.) departed with some women from Medina to find out what had happened at Uhud. She met Hind b. Amr at a place called Harra. Hind was taking her husband Amr b. Jamuh, her son Khallad, and her brother Abdullah's bodies loaded on a camel. Aisha (r.a.) asked:

"How is the situation back at the battlefield?" She replied:

"Well. Allah's Messenger is fine. When he is fine, all troubles mean nothing to us." Pointing at the bodies on the camel, Aisha (r.a.) asked:

"Who are these?" Hind said:

"My brother Abdullah, my son Khallad, and my husband Amr." Aisha asked again:

"Where are you taking them?"





“To Medina. I will bury them there.” When she forced her camel to walk, the camel knelt down. Aisha (r.a.) asked:

“Did it kneel down because of its load?” Hind (r.a.) answered:

“I do not know. It could carry twice as much as this. But I feel there is something different with it.” She forced the camel to get t up, but it knelt down when they turned towards Medina. When it was directed to Uhud it began to run. Later Hind (r.a.) narrated the incident to the Prophet (pbuh). Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked her:

“Your camel is a servant. Has Amr had any bequest?” Hind replied:

“When Amr wanted to go Uhud, he turned towards Qiblah and prayed: O Allah! Bless me with martyrdom. Do not let me come back to my family sad and destitute.” Emphasizing the significance of loyalty to Allah the Almighty Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“This was why your camel was not walking. O People of Ansar! Whoever among you vows to Allah should fulfill the requirements of his promise. O Hind! Your husband Amr was a faithful servant. When he was martyred angels shaded him with their wings and looked at where he was going to be buried. O Hind! Amr b. Jamuh, your son Hallad, and your brother Abdullah will come together and be friends in Paradise.” Hearing this good news Hind (r.a.) requested from Allah’s Messenger (pbuh):

“O Messenger of Allah! Please pray Allah for me to make me join them.”

(Waqidi, I, 264-265; Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, III, 216; Ibn Abdilbarr, III, 1168)

Allah the Almighty gives the following good news to such faithful servants: **“In the case of those who say, Our Lord is Allah, and, further, stand straight and steadfast, the angels descend on them (from time to time): Fear you not! (They suggest), nor grieve! But receive the Glad Tidings of the Garden (of Bliss), which you were promised! We are your protectors in this life and in the Hereafter: therein shall you have all that your souls shall desire; therein shall you have all that you ask for! A hospitable gift from One Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful!”** (Fussilat 41; 30-32)

They will neither be afraid nor worried in the horror of the doomsday. This state is asserted by Allah the Almighty in the Qur’an as follows:



إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ.
أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا جَزَاءٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“Verily those who say, Our Lord is Allah, and remain firm (on that Path), on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. Such shall be Companions of the Garden, dwelling therein (for aye): a recompense for their (good) deeds.” (al-Ahkaf 46; 13-14)

Honesty of tongue and heart occupy a very important place in truthfulness. The heart is the ruler of all the other limbs of the body. A body, which owns a heart believing in One God, is a place of peace and happiness. If one’s heart is straight then all his other organs will be straight, too. The tongue is the interpreter of the heart. Its straightness and crookedness affects other parts of the body. In a prophetic saying it is stated that:

“When a person wakes up in the morning, all the limbs goes to the tongue and say: Fear Allah in regards to protect our rights. We will only get punished because of the things that you have said. We are bound up to you. If you are straight we become straight, too. And if you are crooked and go astray, we follow you and become just like you.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 61) In another saying in this respect the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“A servant’s faith cannot be right unless his heart is straight. His heart cannot be straight unless his tongue is straight.” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 198)

Truthfulness causes improvement of the person’s state and his/her sins to be pardoned. Oft-Forgiving and Most Benevolent Allah the Almighty orders in the Qur’an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا، يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

“O you who believe fear Allah, and (always) say a word directed to the Right: That He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive you your sins: he that obeys Allah and His Messenger, has already attained the highest Achievement.” (al-Ahzab 33; 70-71)



Ka'b b. Malik, who was forgiven by Allah the Almighty because of his truthfulness, said that:

“By Allah, Allah has never bestowed upon me, apart from His guiding me to Islam, a Greater blessing than the fact that I did not tell a lie to Allah’s Apostle which would have caused me to perish as those who have told a lie perished, for Allah described those who told lies with the worst description He ever attributed to anybody else. Allah said:

“They will swear to you by Allah, when you return to them, that you may leave them alone. So leave them alone: for they are an abomination, and Hell is their dwelling place, a fitting recompense for the (evil) that they did. They will swear unto you, that you may be pleased with them. But if you are pleased with them, Allah is not pleased with those who disobey.” (al-Tawba 9; 95-96)” (Bukhari, Maghazi, 79)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated that truthfulness is one of the principles which determines a person’s end as follows:

إِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى
الْجَنَّةِ وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَصْدُقُ حَتَّى يَكُونَ صَدِيقًا

“Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. And a man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes a truthful person. Falsehood leads to Al-Fajur (i.e. wickedness, evil-doing), and Al-Fajur (wickedness) leads to the (Hell) Fire, and a man may keep on telling lies till he is written before Allah, a liar.” (Bukhari, Adab, 69)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) emphasized the importance of the tongue and speech and warned his companions about its disasters. When Sufyan b. Abdullah (r.a.) asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! What is the worst thing you worried about me?” He (pbuh) held his tongue and said:

“This is.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 61)

A believer should live on the straight path and never give up telling the truth. If he lives according to this principle, he will be freed from worries and tension and will be truthful even in his dreams. This is stated by the Messen-

ger of Allah (pbuh) as follows: “...*And the truest vision will be of one who is himself the most truthful in speech...*” (Muslim, Ru’ya, 6)

Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) states that a person should be like a mirror and be balanced in regards to truthfulness and says:

“How shall mirror and scales stop their breath (suppress the truth) for fear of hurting and shaming someone? Mirror and scales are such noble touchstones that if you do service to them for two hundred years and then say to the mirror, ‘I served you so much, so please do not display my ugliness’ and say to the scales ‘I am begging you, please conceal the truth for my sake, display the surplus and do not display the deficiency,’ They will say to you,

‘O pathetic! Do not make everyone laugh at you and ridicule yourself. Since Allah has raised us up in order that by means of us it may be possible to know the truth, If this do not happen (if we fail to display the truth), what worth have we, O young man? How shall we become a standard for the face of the fair?’” (Mathnawi, I, verses: 3546-3551)

Truthfulness occupies an important place in our social life, too. Its significant place in commercial transactions should especially be emphasized. It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) happened to pass by a heap of wheat. He thrust his hand in that heap and his fingers were moistened. He asked the owner:

“What is this?” He replied:

“O Messenger of Allah! These have been drenched by rainfall. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) remarked:

“Why did you not place the drenched part of the heap over so that the people could see it? He who deceives is not of me (is not my follower).” (Muslim, Iman, 164)

In the following verse, Allah the Almighty commands the believers to deal with the disbelievers justly especially if they are truthful:

“...So long as they are true to you, be true to them...” (al-Tawba 9; 7)

Being faithful and living on the straight path is a really difficult task to do. Our Lord Almighty shows us the method to alleviate the difficulty of this task as follows: **“...be with the truthful.”** (al-Tawba 9; 119) In order to learn truthfulness, a believer should be with the truthful. As long as their togetherness con-



tinues, the believer begins to resemble them. Even if he cannot be completely like them, at least he could protect himself from evil.

One could achieve high ranks by being with the truthful. Even the dog of the fellows of the cave (*Ashab al-Kahf*) is mentioned in the Qur'an and its name is eternalized for its loyalty. It is also impossible to achieve salvation just by one's own actions. However, if one's intention is honest, Allah's endless mercy will reach him/her and then he/she can prosper.

P. His Contentedness

“Through the blessings of modesty and contentedness I am the most peaceful person in the world. Both my eyes are closed to the world of pleasures.”

Es'ad Erbili, *Diwan*, p. 51

Istighna or contentedness means to have a generous heart, not to be in need of anybody, to be satisfied with what one owns, to not expect anything from people, and to not tell one's needs to others. Those who are contented are called *mustaghni*. Contentedness is a praised characteristic if it is directed towards this world and its pleasures; but it is forbidden if it is manifested towards Allah the Almighty.

Even if the entire world were given to the contented people, and even if they were told that they would not be questioned for it, they would still live an ascetic life. Because Allah the Almighty has emancipated them from everything other than Himself through His name *Mughni* (or Emancipator).

When Abu Hazin was asked about “what his wealth was,” he replied: “Two things: One of them is to be content with Allah and the other one is not to be in need to people.” He was told: “Then you are poor.” He said: “While everything in this world, in heavens, and everything between them belong to Allah the Almighty, and I am one of his faithful servants, how can I be poor?” According to this understanding, *istighna* means to reach the consciousness of being in need of Allah the Almighty for everything and not to expect anything from anybody but Him.

One of the beautiful names of Allah is *Ghaniyy* or the Rich and the Independent. This attribute states that Allah the Almighty possesses endless richness, that all wealth belongs to Him, and that He has no need. Allah the

Almighty is also *Samad* or Self-Sufficient. *Samad* means the Only Being that needs nothing yet everything is in need of Him. Allah the Almighty explains this attribute as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

“O mankind! You are the poor in your relation to Allah. And Allah! He is the Absolute, the Owner of Praise.” (al-Fatir 35; 15)

Inspired by this verse, many Sufi groups, such as Shazalis, named themselves *fuqara*, the poor, in order to state their need in Allah. Many Muslim scholars, gnostics, and artists signed their works as “*al-Faqir ila Rabbihi'l Qadir* or the poor in need of the Lord the All-Powerful.” Thus, they emphasized that their works came into existence as a blessing of Allah and that they were in need of Allah the Almighty.

To ask for one’s need from nobody else but Allah the Almighty is a praiseworthy and encouraged state. Because, Allah the Almighty likes that His servants present their needs only to Him.

Even though a servant should be disinterested in everything in this world, he should never behave like he has no need for Allah’s blessings. The following prophetic saying elegantly explains this state:

“When the Prophet Job (Aiyyub) was taking a bath naked, golden locusts began to fall on him. Job started collecting them and putting them in his clothes. Upon this Allah the Almighty addressed him:

“O Job! Haven’t I given you enough so that you are not in need of them?”

Job replied, “Dear Lord! Yes! By Your Honor (power)! But I cannot dispense with Your Blessings.”” (Bukhari, Ghusl, 20)

The following supplication of Moses (pbuh) when he was powerless shows what kind of spiritual state that we need to possess towards the blessings of Allah the Almighty:

“...and said: My Lord! Surely I stand in need of whatever good You may send down to me.” (al-Qasas 28; 24)

In response to Moses’ supplication, Allah the Almighty immediately sent His blessings and blessed him with the kinship and mercy of Jethro (Shu’aib)



(pbuh). On the contrary, to act like there is no need for Allah's blessings is great unhappiness. Allah the Almighty says:

“But he who is a greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient, and gives the lie to the Best, We will indeed make smooth for him the Path to Misery; Nor will his wealth profit him when he falls headlong (into the Pit).” (al-Lail 92; 8-11)

Hasan al-Basri (q.s.) used to pray as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ أَغْنِنِي بِالْفَقْرِ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تُفْقِرْنِي بِالِاسْتِعْنَاءِ عَنْكَ

“O Allah! Make me rich by making me in need of You. Do not make me poor by making me self-sufficient and in no need of You.” (Baqillani, p. 107)

The thought of being in no need of Allah the Almighty is the result of vanity and arrogance. Those who go astray because of this bad attribute will be in ignorant actions and behaviors towards the Lord Almighty. Allah warns such people in the Qur'an as follows:

“Nay, but man does transgress all bounds, because he sees himself free from want. Verily, (O man) to your Lord is the return (of all).” (al-Alaq 96; 6-8)

We observe the best example of the state of *istighna* in the life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). A man came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah! Tell me such a deed that when I do it, both Allah and His servant will love me.” The Prophet (pbuh) told the man:

“Do not esteem the world so that Allah will love you. And do not covet for what others have so that people will love you.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 1)

Allah the Almighty asks that His servants work for their livelihood in the following verse: **“And when the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's bounty...”** (al-Jum'a 62; 10) And the Prophet (pbuh) said in this respect that: *“Nobody has ever eaten a better meal than that which one has earned by working with one's own hands. The Prophet of Allah, David used to eat from the earnings of his manual labor.”* (Bukhari, Buyu', 15) It is also known that the Prophet Zechariah (pbuh) provided his livelihood by working as a carpenter. (Muslim, Fada'il, 169)



Aisha (r.a.) informed us that the companions also worked and had jobs. Another report in this matter is that the companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) used to practice manual labor, so they would sweat. And the Prophet (pbuh) used to advise them to take a bath before coming to the mosque. (Bukhari, Buyu', 14)

It is narrated that Allah's Apostle (pbuh) said, *"By Him in Whose Hand my life is, it is better for any one of you to take a rope and cut the wood from the mountains and carry it over his back and sell it as a means of earning his living and thus protect his honor rather than to beg people for something and that they may give him or not."* (Bukhari, Zakat, 50) This prophetic saying is enough to see how important earning one's own livelihood is. In other words, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) is telling us that working under the most difficult conditions is better than resorting to the disgraceful way of begging people for help. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) informs us in another saying that such modest people will be loved by Allah the Almighty saying:

"Allah the Almighty loves the poor believer who abstains from begging and unlawful gain even though he has a family in need." (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 5)

It is also known that Ahmad b. Hanbal, who was famous for his piety, told someone who asked him which one was more superior: wealth or poverty that:

"Go to the market (make trade) and feel contented towards people. I do not know a greater merit than being contented."

On the one hand, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) advised his companions to be generous and help people in every aspect of life; on the other hand, he ordered them not to beg for anything from anybody. After the migration to Medina while Medinan believers shared their possessions with their Meccan brothers, Meccan Muslims responded to their generosity by expressing great and meaningful contentedness. They took only their absolute necessities from their Medinan brothers and paid them back when their conditions got better. (Bukhari, Hiba, 35; Muslim, Jihad, 70)

When Abdur-Rahman b. Awf migrated to Medina, the Prophet established a bond of brotherhood between him and Sa'd b. Al-Rabi al-Ansari. Sa'd was a rich man, so he said to 'Abdur-Rahman,

"I will give you half of my property and will help you marry." Abdur-Rahman said to him,





“My Brother! May Allah bless you in your family and property. Show me the market.” (Bukhari, Buyu’, 1) Thus he earned his livelihood through commerce and later became one of the wealthiest companions.

Awf b. Malik’s (r.a.) following report is a nice one that shows how Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) trained his companions about being contentedness. Awf (r.a.) said that:

“We, nine, eight or seven men, were in the company of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and he said:

“Why don’t you pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah?” Whereas we had recently pledged allegiance. So we said:

“Messenger of Allah, we have already pledged allegiance to you. For what do we need to pledge allegiance to you?” He again said:

“Why don’t you pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah?” And we said:

“Messenger of Allah, we have already pledged allegiance to you.” He again said:

“Why don’t you pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah?” We stretched our hands and asked the Prophet (pbuh):

“O Messenger of Allah! We have already pledged allegiance to you. Now tell us on what things should we pledge allegiance to you. Then he replied saying that:

“You must pledge allegiance that you would worship Allah only and would not associate anything with Him, and observe five prayers, and obey- (and he said one thing in an undertone) -that you would not beg people for anything.” By Allah, as a consequence of that, I saw that some of those people did not even ask people to pick up the whip for them if it fell down.” (Muslim, Zakat, 108)

The early ages of Islam is teemed with the examples of this praised characteristic. Every one of the companions left a nice paradigm behind; because Allah’s Messenger showed them not only how to be contented towards this world but also how to ask from Allah the Almighty to attain this good morality. According to Ali b. Abi Talib’s (r.a.) report, a contractual (*mukatab*) slave came to him and said:



“Help me. I cannot pay my debts.” Ali (r.a.) told him:

“Would you like me to teach you a supplication that was taught to me by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh)? If you continue to recite it, Allah the Almighty will help you to pay your debt even if it is like the mountain of Sabr.” Then he recited the following supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اكْفِنِيْ بِحَلَالِكَ عَنْ حَرَامِكَ وَاغْنِنِيْ بِفَضْلِكَ عَنْ مَّنْ سِوَاكَ

“O Allah! Bless me with your lawful blessings and protect me from the unlawful ones. And do not let me be in need of others.” (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 110)

One must ask for Allah’s help while trying everything which he is able to do to pay his debt. A believer should always seek for lawful gains and abstain from unlawful things. And he should ask for help from Allah for protection from illicit things. Saving and hoarding property greedily without paying attention to its source is something that a believer could never incline towards. A believer, who recognizes the dignity and excellence of Islam, should not to be in need of anybody but Allah as a principle for his life and try to be the giving hand not the taking one.



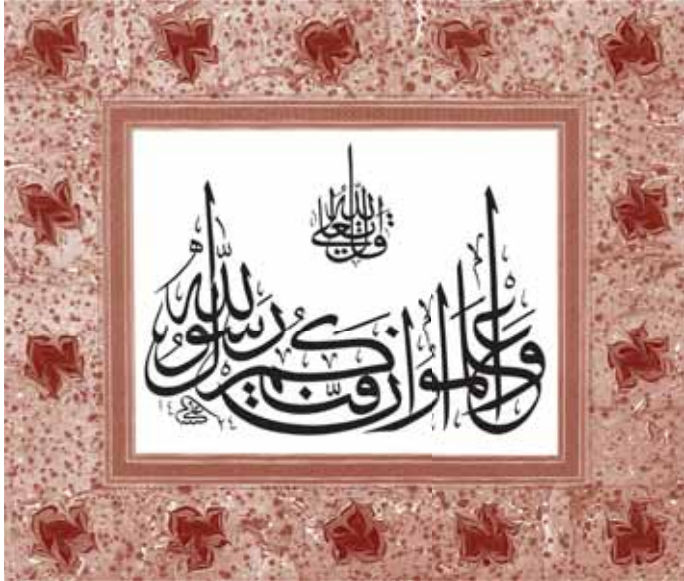


CHAPTER THREE

HIS EXEMPLARY CHARACTER IN MANNERS

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“And know that among you is the Messenger of Allah . ” (al-Hujurat 49; 7)

HIS EXEMPLARY CHARACTER IN MANNERS

To live the religion in its most perfect way is possible by observing good manners. The word *adab* means good morality, manners, civility, abashment, elegance, good behavior, and establishing good social relations. In other words, *adab* or *adab-i muasharat* are the principles of civility.

These principles first indwell into one's personality and then reflect upon society. Thus an orderly and prosperous society can be founded. Good manners are the most important principles that Islam and its Prophet want to show people. By means of *adab* a believer knows the limits of his/her responsibilities towards Allah and other human beings. Because observing the customary actions of the Prophet (pbuh) is necessary to fulfill obligatory deeds properly. Moreover, observing the commendable actions is a requirement to follow the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. Finally, in order to reach the ideal level in observing commendable deeds it is necessary to comply with the rules of *adab*. In other words, without the principles of *adab* obligatory deeds cannot reach the level of perfection. Maybe this is why the Prophet (pbuh) taught his ummah certain rules of manners in every aspect of life.

The object of the principles of manners is to establish a conscious order in believers' lives. Allah's Messenger (pbuh), who has been a paradigm for his followers, said that:

"It is a fact that I am like a father to you. I discipline and sanctify you; and teach you the information that you need..." (Abu Dawud, Taharah, 4) Thus, he stated that he also observed these principles of manners in his own life.

A polytheist told Salman al-Farisi (r.a.) mockingly:

"I see that your friend Muhammad teaches you even how to relieve excrement." Salman (r.a.) confirmed seriously what the polytheist said saying:

"Yes, he really does." Then he stated the Prophet's teachings about the manners of going to the bathroom. (Muslim, Taharah, 57-58)





Allah's Messenger (pbuh) expressed the significance of manners saying: *"Good manners, acting thoughtfully, and behaving prudently are one twenty fourth of the prophethood."* Friends of Allah also said that: *"O servants in love! Adorn your selves with manners, for all the ways to the love for Allah are made up from manners."* Therefore in order to achieve divine love one needs to adorn his soul with good manners.

Good manners have two sides: external and internal. Most people think that manners means to just fulfill the external side, while for people of spiritual manners it means to be careful about one's internal side just as much as the external aspect and to be in a state of constant spiritual reverence of Allah the Almighty. The internal side of the manners is like the soul compared to the body.

In the following lines, Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) elegantly states that a believer needs to pray and ask for good manners from Allah the Almighty and for spiritual and moral beautification, for those manners are one's only weapons to beat the Devil:

"Let us implore Allah to help us to maintain self-control: one who lacks self-control is deprived of the grace of the Lord. The undisciplined man does not maltreat himself alone, but he sets the whole world on fire. Anyone behaving with irreverence in the path of the Friend is a brigand who robs men, and he is no man. Drowning in the sea of sadness and regret is the end of those who behave irreverently on this path. Through discipline this Heaven has been filled with light, and through discipline the angels became immaculate and holy. By reason of irreverence of the moon the sun was eclipsed, and insolence caused an 'Azázil (Devil) to be turned back from the Divine door." (Mathnawi, v. I, verses: 79-80; 90-93)

Below is the translation of Muhammed Esad Erbili's (q.s.) some verses about good manners:

"Even though my eyes have seen many blessings of good manners in this world, it is impossible to get enough of their blessings. It is necessary for those who ask for an elixir from Hidir to drink a sip from the fountain of *adab*. I have never seen a more effective cure than manners for the illnesses like pride, vanity, and ignorance.

An intelligent person who holds tightly to good manners has obtained the throne of high value and the state of esteem. The light of the candle of Sufi



training (*sayr-u suluk*) takes the spirit to the Beloved and the bright moon of manners enlightens the eyes. If the taste of manners does not touch the lips, the joy of beauty cannot be seen in the lips and words of friends. O Esad! Bring some pearls from the sea of manners when coming back to your abode from your journey or *sayr-u suluk*.” (*Diwan*, p. 24-25)

In conclusion, in order to ascend up the spiritual steps and to succeed in life it is necessary to follow the manners taught by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

A. Manners of Eating and Drinking

A believer needs to establish good manner as a characteristic in every moment of his/her life. Manners of eating and drinking of a believer should also be befitting to the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh). It is commanded to be careful about eating lawful food and avoiding wasting. The Muslim community has its own special table and eating manners. Knowing these manners and acting accordingly to them is a very significant part in living a happy and healthy life.

1. Manners of Eating

Before and after eating hands should be washed. This is very important for health and purity. In one of his sayings the Prophet (pbuh) makes the following warning:

“If anyone spends the night with grease on his hand which he has not washed away after eating, he can blame only himself if some trouble comes to him.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 53)

It is one of the beauties of Islam to begin eating like in every other good deed by mentioning the name of Allah. Jabir b. Abdullah reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying:

“When a person enters his house and mentions the name of Allah at the time of entering it and while eating the food, Satan says addressing to his soldiers: You have no place to spend the night and no evening meal; but when he enters without mentioning the name of Allah, the Satan says: You have found a place to spend the night, and when he does not mention the name of Allah





while eating food, the Satan says: “You have found a place to spend the night and an evening meal.” (Muslim, Ashribah, 103)

We can find what to do if we forget to mention Allah’s name at the beginning of a meal in the following advices of the Prophet (pbuh). Aisha (r.a.) narrated that once the Prophet (pbuh) had been eating with six of his companions. A bedouin came and finished all the food on the plates. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“If this man had begun eating by mentioning the name of Allah, it would have been enough for all of us. Therefore when one of you eats, he should mention Allah’s name; if he forgets to mention Allah’s name at the beginning, he should say:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ فِي أَوَّلِهِ وَآخِرِهِ

“In the name of Allah at the beginning and at the end of it.” (Ibn Majah, At’imah, 7; Abu Dawud, At’imah, 15)

Another interesting incident similar to the above mentioned context happened as follows: According to the narration of Umayyah ibn Makhshi (r.a.), a man was having his meal next to the Prophet (pbuh). He did not mention Allah’s name until there remained the last morsel. When he raised it to his mouth, he said:

“In the name of Allah at the beginning and at the end of it.” The Prophet (pbuh) laughed and said:

“The devil kept eating along with him, but when he mentioned Allah’s name, he vomited what was in his belly.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 16)

It is a nice thing to have meals together when it is possible. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), who said “*there is mercy in congregation and torment in separation,*” (Munawi, III, 470) advised to eat in groups. According to Wahshi ibn Harb’s report, some of the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) said:

“O Allah’s Apostle! We eat but we are not satisfied.” He said:

“*Perhaps you eat separately.*” They replied: “Yes.” He said:

“If you gather together at your food and mention Allah’s name, you will be blessed in it.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 14)



One should not begin eating before his elders. Hudhaifa (r.a.) reported:

“When we attended a dinner along with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) we did not lay our hands on the food until Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had laid his hand and commenced eating (the food).” (Muslim, Ashribah, 102) This nice habit of companions has been adopted by the believing families for many centuries. It is considered a blameworthy act to sit before the elders of the family and begin eating.

A believer should eat with his/her right hand and start eating the food that is in front him/her from the nearer part of his/her dish. It is narrated by Umar b Abi Salama (r.a.):

“I was a boy under the care of Allah’s Apostle and my hand used to go around the dish while I was eating. So Allah’s Apostle said to me,

يَا غُلَامُ! سَمِّ اللَّهَ وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ

“O boy! Mention the Name of Allah and eat with your right hand, and eat of the dish what is nearer to you.” Since then I have applied those instructions when eating.” (Bukhari, At’mah, 2)

Salama b. Akwa’ reported on the authority of his father that a person ate in the presence of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) with his left hand, whereupon he said:

“Eat with your right hand.” He said:

“I cannot do that,” whereupon he (the Holy Prophet) said:

“May you not be able to do that.” It was vanity that prevented him from doing it, and after Prophet’s (pbuh) curse he could not raise his right hand up to his mouth anymore. (Muslim, Ashribah, 107)

Today as a result of the effects of non-Muslim cultures and in the name of modernity some Muslims tend to adopt the habit of eating with their left hand. It looks like placing the knives on the right and spoons and forks on the left side of the plates in public places is the manifestation of this new tendency. It is obvious that this concept is against Islamic table manners. Believers must be very careful and scrupulous about it.





One should avoid frivolous acts and behaviors which would be considered as greediness. Jabala bin Suhaim narrated that:

“At the time of Ibn Az-Zubair, we were struck with famine, and he provided us with dates for our food. Abdullah bin Umar used to pass by us while we were eating, and say,

“Do not eat two dates together at a time, for the Prophet forbade us the eating of two dates together at a time.” Ibn Umar used to add, “Unless one takes the permission of his companions.” (Bukhari, At’imah, 44)

In this context, chewing food thoroughly and not taking a second morsel before finishing the first one are among the manners of eating.

One should not belittle his food or at least should not voice his dislike. Abu Huraira (r.a.) reported that the Prophet (pbuh) would never find deficiencies in his meals; if there was something he wanted he would eat, otherwise, he would not. (Bukhari, Manaqib, 23)

After finishing one’s meal clearing the plate is another Islamic manner. According to the narration of Anas b. Malik (r.a.), Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would lick his three fingers at the end of his meals. In this respect, the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“When any one of you drops a mouthful he should pick it up and remove any of the filth on it, and then eat it, and should not leave it for the Satan, and should not wipe his hand with towel until he has licked his fingers, for he does not know in what portion of the food the blessing lies.” (Muslim, Ashribah, 136)

It is stated in this saying that the Prophet (pbuh) would lick his fingers three times at the end of his meals. In those days for the lack of or the scarcity of spoons and forks meals were often eaten by bare hands. This was very natural under the circumstances of the day. By teaching to wash hands before and after the meals Islam has averted the problems which might result from this. In fact thoroughly washed hands can be much cleaner than the metal forks and spoons. Today insisting to eat by hand instead of using forks and spoons and considering it as a prophetic custom because of the above mentioned traditions should not be seen wrong. A Muslim should always act neatly and cleanly.

Islam prohibits eating from utensils made from gold and silver. Hudhaifa (r.a.) reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:



*“Do not wear silk or Dibaja, and do not drink in silver or golden vessels, and do not eat in plates of such metals, for such things are for the unbelievers in this worldly life and for us in the Hereafter.”*⁷⁴ (Bukhari, At’imah, 44; Muslim, Libas, 4) Another important point is to try to be with pious believers during meals and stay away from the tables of the sinners.

It is also forbidden to be at tables serving alcoholic beverages. Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said that: *“those who believe in Allah and the Last Day should not sit at the tables where alcoholic drinks are served.”* (Tirmidhi, Adab, 43) In this day and age, when alcoholic beverages are so widespread, Muslims must be very careful not to eat or shop in places where alcohol is present. If it is not absolutely necessary, one should not act loosely in this matter because it is for the benefit of believers.

Leaning against something is not an appropriate manner of eating. Wahb b. Abdullah (r.a.) narrated that Allah’s Apostle said: *“I do not take my meals while leaning (against something).”* (Bukhari, At’imah, 44)

Abdullah b. Bushr related:

“I had given some lamb meat to the Prophet (pbuh). He sat on his knees to eat it. A bedouin expressed his surprise saying that:

74. Islam prohibits golden and silver utensils and other household items for both males and females. Muslim scholars agree upon that the negation in the related prophetic sayings means prohibition. This prohibition is an unconditional one and only some items exempted from it. While Hudhaifa was in Madain, he asked for water. The chief of the village brought him a silver vessel. Hudhaifa threw it away and said, “I have thrown it away because I told him not to use it, but he has not stopped using it. Then he narrated the following hadith:

“Do not wear silk or Dibaja, and do not drink in silver or golden vessels, and do not eat in plates of such metals, for such things are for the unbelievers in this worldly life and for us in the Hereafter.” (Bukhari, At’imah, 44; Muslim, Libas, 4)

It is permissible to have golden and silver utensils, trays, etc. as ornaments. It is not prohibited to use household items, which are not made from pure gold and silver, but only veneered and decorated by them. Having gold teeth or a golden crown on a tooth is also acceptable as long as it is done for necessity not just for adornment. In fact, a companion named Arfaja b. As’ad had lost his nose during the Battle of Kilab before the advent of Islam and had a silver nose implanted. When the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) saw him, he advised Arfaja to have a gold nose. So he changed his nose with a gold one. (Abu Dawud, Hatam, 7; Tirmidhi, Libas, 31) It is because gold is healthier and does not make smell. Today if an implant is needed for the body, doctors usually choose gold and platinum ones.



“What kind of sitting is this?” Upon this Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) replied:

“Allah the Almighty certainly created me as a humble and generous servant and not an arrogant and stubborn one.” (Ibn Majah, At’imah, 6)

Such an act is not only a way of showing respect to the blessing itself, but also and more importantly it is a way of showing reverence to the Giver of these blessings. Eating food without leaning against something has also many health benefits.

Another way of showing reverence to the Owner of the blessings is to pray at the end of meals. Whenever the Prophet finished his meals (or when his dining sheet was taken away), he used to pray saying:

“Praise be to Allah Who has satisfied our needs and quenched our thirst. Your favor cannot be compensated or denied. Praise be to You, O our Lord! Your favor cannot be compensated, nor can be left, nor can be dispensed with, O our Lord!” (Bukhari, At’imah, 54) Another prophetic supplication is reported as follows:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَجَعَلَنَا مُسْلِمِينَ

“Praise be to Allah Who has given us food and drink and made us Muslims.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 52)

In another saying of the Prophet (pbuh) the importance of praying after meals is expressed as follows:

“If someone says after a meal: ‘Praise be to Allah, Who has given me this food without my power and ability, which could affect this’ his past sins will be forgiven.” (Abu Dawud, Libas, 1)

According to a report, Abu Haytham prepared some food and invited the Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions. When they finished it, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told the people with him:

“Give your brother a reward.” Companions asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! What is his reward?” He (pbuh) replied:

“If some people enter the house of a man, his food is eaten and his drink is drunk, and then they supplicate to Allah for him, this is his reward.” (Abu Dawud, At’imah, 54)

It is necessary to eat moderately and not to stuff one self. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that: *“Nobody filled a cup more dangerous than his stomach; whereas a few morsels, which could keep him up, would be enough for him. If someone needs to eat more then he should reserve one third of his stomach for food, one third of it for drink, and one third of it for his breath.”* (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 47)

The Prophet’s comparison of a stuffed stomach with a dangerous cup shows the close relationship between physical and spiritual health of eating and drinking.

The ruler of Iskandariya sent a doctor along with many gifts to the Prophet (pbuh). Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told the doctor:

“You may go back to your family, for we are such people that we do not eat unless we are hungry. And when we eat we do not eat till we are full.” (Halabi, III, 299)

In both these traditions our attention is attracted to the difference between eating just as much as to live and making eating the purpose of life. The required amount of eating is the amount which gives enough strength to fulfill daily activities and acts of worship. It is obvious that this is something relative and differs from one person to the other. This is why ordering to leave one third of the stomach for air the Prophet (pbuh) showed a way which can be applicable to everybody.

It is an old saying that a person should eat to live not live to eat. People die during the times of famine not because of hunger but because of not satisfying their habitual style of eating.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) expresses the difference of the eating habits of a Muslim and non-Muslim in the following saying:

“Abu Huraira reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) invited a non-Muslim. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) commanded that a goat be milked for him. It was milked and he drank its milk. Then the second one was milked and he drank its milk, and then the other one was milked and he drank its milk till he



drank the milk of seven goats. On the next morning he embraced Islam. And Allah's Messenger (pbuh) commanded that a goat should be milked for him and he drank its milk and then another was milked but he did not finish it, whereupon Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said: A believer drinks in one intestine whereas a non-believer drinks in seven intestines." (Muslim, Ashribah, 186)

Nafi (r.a.) reported that,

"Ibn Umar (r.anhuma) would not eat without having a poor person as a guest at his table. One day I brought a needy man to Ibn Umar. The man ate much. Ibn Umar said:

"O Nafi! Next time, do not bring this man to me; for I heard Allah's Messenger (pbuh) say that the non-Muslim eats in seven intestines." (Bukhari, At'imah, 12; Muslim, Ashribah, 184)

In the following verse, Allah the Almighty describes the eating manners of the non-believers through a metaphor:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَهُمْ

"...While those who disbelieve take their comfort in this life and eat even as the cattle eat, and the Fire is their habitation." (Muhammad 47; 12)

All that matters for non-believers are their stomachs and desires. They do not even think about the afterlife. They are ambitious for the world and unmindful of their end. Therefore, a believer should act different than the non-believer and be moderate in his eating and drinking. The believer should not regard this world and its blessings more than is needed. For it is stated in a saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

إِنَّ مِنَ السَّرَفِ أَنْ تَأْكُلَ كُلَّ مَا اشْتَهَيْتَ

"Eating whatever your self desires is certainly wasting" (Ibn Majah, At'imah, 51) In addition, such acts are considered as immoderation by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). According to the friends of Allah, in *Shari'ah* eating after one's stomach is full is considered immoderation; in *tariqah* eating till feeling full is considered excessiveness; while in *haqiqah* eating without thinking of Allah is considered wastefulness.

Once when a man started belching before the Messenger of Allah from excessive eating, he (the Prophet) warned him saying:

“Stop burping. For those who fill their stomach excessively will be the ones who will stay hungry for the longest period of time in the Hereafter.” (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 37)

Another good manner of eating is to not attend gatherings after eating something, such as onion and garlic, which may bother and disturb people because of their smell. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“Whoever has eaten garlic or onion should keep away from us (or should keep away from our mosque).” (Bukhari, At’imah)

Someone once brought an unpleasant smelling vegetable dish to the Prophet (pbuh). He did not eat from it, but he told one of his companions:

“Eat. (I don’t eat) for I converse with those whom you do not converse with (i.e. the angels).” (Bukhari, Sifat al-Salah)

Angels and other spiritual creations are pleased with people who are clean and smell nice and dislike the opposite. This is why the most appropriate behavior would be to not go to the mosques and other places where people gather smelling like onion, garlic, cigarette, heavy perfumes and other kinds of scents.⁷⁵

As it is stated in the following verse: **“O you who believe! eat of the good things that we have provided for you, and be grateful to Allah, if it is Him you worship.”** (al-Baqara 2; 172) This verse shows that eating all kinds of lawful food is essentially permitted in Islam. However, just like in all other aspects of life, it is necessary to be moderate in eating and to avoid wasting and excessiveness. This is stated in the Qur’an as follows:

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

“...Eat and drink, but be not prodigal. Lo! He loves not the prodigals.” (al-A’raf 7; 31)

75. According to experts, scientists use substances in perfumes which attract opposite sex’s attention and do serious research in this regard. Researches about the effects of scents on the sense centers of brain are done and findings are used in cosmetics industry. Therefore believers should be very careful in this respect.





Every action has a goal and intention which plays an important role in deciding the value of our actions. So food gives strength in accordance with the intention it is eaten. This is why the intention of eating should be to gain strength for obedience and worship to Allah the Almighty and not for pleasures which the animal-like soul yearns for. In other words, eating should not be the goal of life and it should be seen as a means on the path to the real goal. What is dangerous in eating is to commit sins because of a full stomach.

Rumi (q.s.) stated the relationship between eating and drinking and human spirituality as follows:

“Instead of being like an acarid and perching on dirty skin and swelling, be like the birds with half empty stomachs so that you may fly in the skies.”

It is advised to cover utensils at night. In this context Allah’s Apostle made the following warnings:

“When it gets dark, restrain your children from going out, for satans spread around at that time. And when a part of the night is passed, free them and shut the doors remembering Allah’s name for the Satan cannot open a closed door, put out your candles mentioning Allah’s name. And tighten the lids of water cans and mention the name of Allah. Cover your utensils and mention the name of Allah even though you should just put something on them, and extinguish your lamps for mice may knock them down and burn the family members.” (Bukhari, Bad’ul Khalk, 11; Muslim, Ashribah, 96)

In another hadith, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“Cover the vessels and tie the waterskin, for there is a night in a year when pestilence descends, and it does not pass an uncovered vessel or an untied waterskin but some of that pestilence descends into it.” (Muslim, Ashribah, 99)

2. Manners of Drinking

The Prophet’s traditions also teach us manners of drinking water and other beverages. According to sayings of the Prophet (pbuh), if it is possible water should be drunk from transparent cups. He also forbade the drinking of water directly from the mouth of big water-skins for the possibility of containing harmful substances. (Bukhari, Ashriba, 23)



One should mention the name of Allah and take three breaths while drinking, and thank Allah in the end. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would take three breaths while drinking (Bukhari, Ashriba, 26) and say in this respect: *"Do not drink your water in one breath like camels. Drink it in two or three breaths. When you drink something, mention the name of Allah and send your praises to Allah in the end."* (Tirmidhi, Ashriba, 13)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) explained the benefits of drinking water in three breaths as follows:

1. Those who drink water and breathe outside the vessel three times quench their thirst.

2. This way of drinking is also healthier. (Muslim, Tahara 65; Ashriba, 121)

If water goes down to the stomach slowly and gradually, the human body directs it to the places where it is needed. Whereas, if much water is taken to the body at once, it disrupts the balance of the body; so it cannot function properly. One who feels cold will feel colder because of the coldness of the water going down to the stomach. Likewise, a warm body reacts to the sudden flow of water improperly and cannot get the proper benefit from it. However, such harmful effects will not be in question if it is drunk slowly and gradually.

Breathing upon the beverage is not deemed appropriate for whatever the reason is. According to narration of Abu Said al-Hudri, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prohibited breathing upon the drinks. A man asked the Prophet (pbuh),

"What should I do, if I see something in my drink?" Allah's Messenger (pbuh) replied:

"Pour it down." The man asked again:

"I cannot quench my thirst when I drink in one breath." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told him:

"Then take your mouth from the vessel (or drink it in three sips.)" (Tirmidhi, Ashriba, 15)

Prohibition of breathing upon beverages or drinking in one breath is a very important principle of good manners; because breathing on water is something that animals do while drinking. It is also possible to drop something into the water from the mouth while blowing upon the beverage. This may repel the people around. Breathing carbon dioxide upon water may also pollute





the water and cause health problems. Mentioning the name of Allah before drinking water or other beverages, drinking in two or three sips and without breathing upon it, and finally thanking Allah for His blessings are among the Islamic principles of manners.

If it is possible water and other beverages should also not be drunk while standing. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) forbade drinking while standing.

Anas reported that Allah's Apostle (pbuh) forbade that a person should drink while standing. Qatada reported:

"We asked him:

"What about eating?" Thereupon he (Anas) said:

"That is even worse and more detestable (abominable)." (Muslim, Ashriba, 113)

However, it is reported in some traditions that the Prophet (pbuh) sometimes drank Zam-zam water while standing. Ibn Abbas (r.anhuma) said that,

"I gave Zam-zam water to Allah's Apostle and he drank it while standing." (Bukhari, Hajj, 76)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) sometimes drank water while standing thus showed his ummah that this is not something that is forbidden. Though later the reason of his disapproval might be to discourage people because of its health hazards. To show his preference and encourage others, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stated his disapproval about drinking beverages while standing and regarded it more appropriate to sit and drink. Another spiritual reason of this is to guide his ummah and direct them to good manners; for drinking while sitting is a more elegant and appropriate way of behavior and it provides better quenching of the thirst and tranquility while drinking. It also enables the human body to send water to where it essentially needs to go.

In a gathering one should begin offering the beverages from the person on the right. When Allah's Messenger (pbuh) drank something, he would offer some of it to the people around him. He would always offer the beverage starting from the person on his right and continue in that direction. It was narrated by Anas b. Malik (r.a.):



“Milk mixed with water was brought to Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) while a bedouin was on his right and Abu Bakr (r.a.) was on his left. He drank of it and then gave it to the bedouin and said,

“The right” “The right (first)!” (Bukhari, Ashribah, 14, 18)

Another report narrated by Sahl b. Sad (r.a.) is as follows:

“Allah’s Apostle was offered something to drink. He drank of it while on his right was a boy and on his left were some elderly people. He said to the boy,

“May I give it to these (elderly) people first?” The boy said, “By Allah, O Allah’s Apostle! I will not give up my share from you to somebody else.” On that Allah’s Apostle placed the cup in the hand of that boy.” (Bukhari, Ashribah, 19)

If there is a respectable person in a gathering, the offering should first be presented to him/her and continued with the next person on his/her right. It is also a nice manner to take a piece from what righteous believers ate and drank with the intention of expecting to get some blessings from it as well.

Another principle of manner is that the person distributing the beverages drinks last; for in a prophetic saying it is stated that *“The person distributing the water drinks from the water last.”* (Tirmidhi, Ashriba, 20) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated these brief and meaningful words during a journey. During that long and tiring journey believers became really tired and they were out of water. Harith b. Rib’i (r.a.) did his best in his duty of serving the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) even though he was very tired. When believers got very thirsty Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked for his water-skin which contained a little water. Then the Prophet (pbuh) manifested a miracle. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) began to pour water in a small cup and Abu Qatada gave it to the companions to drink. And when the people saw that there was a little water in the water-skin, they fell upon it. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Behave well; the water is enough to satiate all of you.” Then the Companions began to receive their share of water with calmness without showing any anxiety and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) began to fill the cup, and Abu Qatada began to serve them till no one was left except him and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). He then filled the cup with water and said to Abu Qatada: *“Drink it.”*



Abu Qatada replied:

“O Messenger of Allah, I would not drink till you drink.” Upon this he said:

إِنَّ سَاقِيَ الْقَوْمِ آخِرُهُمْ شَرْبًا

“The server of the people is the last among them to drink.” So Abu Qatada drank the water and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) also drank it and the people came to the place of water quite happy and satiated.” (Muslim, Masajid, 311)

One should also avoid drinking water from golden and silver cups. Hu-daifah (r.a.) said that “The Prophet forbade us to wear clothes of silk or Dibaj, and to drink in gold or silver utensils, and said, “*These things are for the unbelievers in this world and for the (Muslims) in the Hereafter.*” (Bukhari, Ashribah, 28) According to the narration of Umm Salama (r.a.), the Prophet (pbuh) said: “*He who drinks in the vessel of silver in fact drinks down in his belly the fire of Hell.*” (Muslim, Libas, 1-2)

B. Manners of Clothing

“...But the raiment of righteousness- that is the best...”

(Al-A’raf 7; 26)

Wearing nice clothes and having a nice appearance among people is just as important as the necessity of eating and drinking. A body can only be protected from the harmful effects of the environment and saved from shames through clothes and thus achieve the perfection of his/her beauty.

Indeed covering is a natural reality for everything in this universe. The atmosphere around the world, barks of the trees and peels of the fruits, skins and feathers of the animals, the placenta around the fetus are all types of clothing which protect them against the outer world and beautify their appearance. These facts are mentioned in following verses:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوَاتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا،
وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ

“O Children of Adam! We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame, and splendid vesture, but the raiment of fear of Allah, that is best...” (Al-A’raf 7; 26)

“...He (Allah) made you garments to protect you from heat (and cold)...” (al-Nahl 16; 81)

The feeling of being protected from the effects of environment and climate exist not only in humans but also in animals. The distinguishing difference between them is that human beings have the ability to use their intellect consciously and protect their decency and respect. Furthermore, this is only possible by covering the parts of body which are considered private. The phrase **“the raiment of piety”** both draws our attention to this matter and also shows that attaining the state of piety protects believers from spiritual disasters. Haja Muhammad Lutfi says that:

Clothes which are against the object imposed by Allah the Almighty and worn against piety cannot be considered Islamic. When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) saw Aisha’s sister Asma (r. anha) wearing a thin and transparent dress, he turned his head and told her:

“O Asma’, when a woman reaches the age of menstruation, it does not suit her that she displays her parts of body except this and this, and he pointed to her face and hands.” (Abu Dawud, Libas, 31)

Again the Prophet (pbuh) says about this matter the following statement:

“Two are the types amongst the denizens of Hell, the one possessing whips like the tail of an ox and they flog people with their help. (The second one) the women who would be naked in spite of their being dressed, who are seduced (to wrong paths) and seduce others with their hair high like humps. These women would not get into Paradise and they would not perceive the odor of Paradise, although its fragrance can be perceived from such and such distance (from great distance).” (Muslim, Janna, 52)



The real object of wearing clothes is to cover the body properly and attain a decent appearance. When the Prophet (pbuh) wore a new clothe, he would pray saying:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي كَسَانِي مَا أُوَارِي بِهِ عَوْرَتِي وَأَتَجَمَّلُ بِهِ فِي حَيَاتِي

“All praises are due to Allah who lets me wear this clothe covering my private parts and makes me look good in my life.” And then he would say: *“Those who wear a new clothe and say these praises and give the old clothes as charity will be under the protection of Allah the Almighty in their life and after their death.”* (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 107)

Women should be more careful in clothing. One day Hafsa bint Abd ar-Rahman visited Aisha (r. anhumah) and Hafsa was wearing a long thin head scarf Aisha took it and replaced it with a thick one for her.” (*Muwatta*, Libas, 6)

According to Qur’an, teachings of the Prophet, and the consensus of the Muslim scholars, it is obligatory for Muslim women to cover their head and neck, and wear clothes which would not show the lines of their body or silhouettes. It is commanded in the following verse:

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms ...” (al-Nur 24; 31)

In this verse believing women are asked:

1. To protect their gaze from the unlawful.
2. To protect their chastity.
3. To not display their beauty and ornaments except the ones that appear ordinarily.
4. To lower their veils down to their necks, throat, etc.

Then the verse continues and says before whom women are allowed to show their beauty to.

The Arabic word *humur* is the plural form of *himar* which means “something with which a woman covers her head or head-cover. *Humur* is the tra-



ditional headscarf of the women in the Arabian Peninsula both before and after the advent of Islam. Before Islam, the headscarf was usually worn as an ornament and it was worn so the ends of the scarf would hang at the back of the body. It was the fashion of those days that women would leave the front part of their clothes open and thus their breasts would not get covered. (Qurtubi, XII, 153; Elmalılı, V, 3506) Islam bans the uncovering of certain parts of the body and obligates to veil oneself. Therefore, it is required for Muslim women to cover their heads, hair, ears, neck, throat, and breasts. According to Aisha's (r.anha) report, when the verse "*That they should draw their veils over their bosoms*" was revealed, women from Ansar and Muhajirun tore their thick outer garments and curtains and then made veils from them. (Bukhari, Tafsir, 24/13; Abu Dawud, Libas, 31-33)

In another narration, hiding the lines of the body is stated as another basic characteristic of Islamic dress code. (Haythami, V, 137)⁷⁶

Transparent apparels are also disapproved by Islam. It is necessary to wear another piece of clothing either under or over transparent ones. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

"O Prophet Tell your wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments close round them (when they go abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, most Merciful." (Al-Ahzab 33; 59)

In this verse, Muslim women are ordered to wear an outer garment when going outside and not to go out in the clothes, which they wear at home. All exegetes of the Qur'an have unanimously stated, though in different terms, that the word *jilbab* in the verse refers to an outer garment which should be worn over daily dress and which covers the entire body. Therefore, today it is necessary for Muslim women to put on an outer garment like a coat or cloak when going out. This verse not only expresses the necessity of covering the body but also describes the exact way of clothing. (Tabari, *Tafsir*, XXII, 33; Razi, XXV, 230; Abu Hayyan, VII, 250)⁷⁷

76. Experts also express that wearing loose and comfortable garments is very important for human health. It is also known that because tight clothes, like jeans and tights, slows the blood stream and prevents the comfortable movement of the joints, they cause various health problems.

77. Muslim scholars have interpreted the word *zinat* and the expression as "*only that which is apparent (like hands and face)*" in chapter Nur verse 31 and made the following observations:





The Muslim dress code must be observed at all times even when working or performing sports. Miswar b. Makhrama reported:

“I was carrying a heavy stone and my lower garment was loose, and it, therefore, slipped off so soon that I could not place the stone on the ground and so I carried it to its proper place. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Return to your cloth (lower garment), take it and tie it around your waist and do not walk naked.” (Muslim, Hayd, 78)

Resembling the opposite sex in clothing is also forbidden. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) informed us that those men who wear clothes like women and those women who wear clothes like men will be away from the Divine Mercy. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 28)

This warning of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) about those trying to resemble the opposite sex in appearance proves that attire of a person is not just a simple matter of appearance. It is also known that psychological anomalies of sexes begin with imitating the opposite sex. Unfortunately in the contemporary world serious and special efforts have been made to encourage resemblance between sexes. Supposedly to provide some economic conveniences companies produce clothes to be worn by both sexes and make great investments.⁷⁸

“*Zinat*” are the things, be it natural or artificial, which adorn and beautify a person in the eyes of the others. Thus, there is two kinds of *zinat*: 1. Gold, silver, etc. ornaments of women and 2. Parts of a woman’s body which attract male attention. According to interpreters of the Qur’an, the latter is the more appropriate meaning pointed out in the Qur’an.

What companions like Ali, Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Anas (r. anhum), and scholars from the following generation, like Said b. Jubair, Ata, Mujahid, Dahhak; and mujtahid imams like Abu Hanifa, Malik, and Awzai and many others (may Allah have mercy on their souls) interpreted the expression **“only that which is apparent”** as the face and hands up to the wrists. Some companions, scholars from the following generations, and jurists, like Shafii, and Ahmad b. Hanbal interpreted this expression based on the special meaning of the verb *zahara* as the parts of the body which get uncovered by themselves. Thus, it is not possible for the “face and hands” to be understood for they can be covered and they cannot get naturally uncovered. Therefore, they should be the ornaments of a woman which may get uncovered unintentionally, for instance by means of wind. Absence of exception in the second mentioning of the term *zinat* also supports this interpretation. Another interpretation is that this phrase means *siyah* or the outer garment which is impossible to be covered. (Tabari, *Tafsir*, XIII, 92-93; Jassas, V, 172)

78. Clothes have also effects on formation of human psychology. For instance, behavioral changes are observed in people who, for some reason, wear opposite sex’s apparels.



Such degeneration can be prevented only by taking the Prophet's warnings seriously and following them.

On the other hand, apparels which do not serve the main objective of dressing and which are just worn for pride and to show-off are also forbidden. Some of the sayings of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in this context are as follows:

"Allah the Almighty will make those who wear garments of fame in this world wear garments of humiliation in the Hereafter." (Ibn Majah, Libas, 24)

Allah's Apostle said, "Allah will not look at the person who drags his garment (behind him) out of pride and arrogance." (Bukhari, Libas, 1, 5)

The phrase *"garments of fame"* stated in the above mentioned traditions has been interpreted in two ways: a person's fame among others for his/her clothes can be either because he/she wears luxurious and showy clothes or even because he/she wears shabby and poor looking clothes, and thus trying to manifest piety and righteousness.

In addition to negative behaviors, like patronizing others and bragging, extravagance in clothing needs to be avoided. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that: *"Eat, drink, give in charity, and wear clothes provided that it is not wasting or bragging."* (Bukhari, Libas, 1) The great companion Ibn Abbas (r.a.) also narrates the Prophet (pbuh) saying : *"As long as you do not fall into the mistakes of pride or waste, you may eat whatever you like and wear whatever you wish."* (Bukhari, Libas, 1)

Another extremism of clothing in the contemporary world is seen in the leather goods industry. Some animal species are under the danger of extinction as a result of uncontrolled hunting for their furs.⁷⁹

79. For some types of fur unbelievable methods are used and very high prices are paid. For instance, mink and astrakhan are among the most expensive ones. Mink is used for producing expensive leather ornaments. Whereas, astrakhan is a type of fur which is produced by killing the young lambs and kids while they are still in their mothers' womb. In order to produce one fur coat at least eight to ten animals have to be killed. Since wasting and bragging are forbidden by the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet (pbuh), it is most suitable to be careful about them for the happiness in the Hereafter. The following incident which occurred between Suleiman the Magnificent and Sheikh al-Islam Abussuud presents a nice measure for sensitive believers who are concerned with the judgment in the Hereafter. One day Sultan Suleiman asked Abussuud's legal opinion about killing the ants which were harmful to the pear trees through the following lines:





Friends of Allah have explained the extravagance in clothing in three degrees: from the point of *Shari'ah* it means excessive clothing; from the point of *tariqah* it means wearing what is more than a necessity; and finally from the point of *haqiqah* it refers to showing excessive love for clothing.

On the other hand, if someone abstains from luxurious clothing out of piety despite having the financial means, he/she will be rewarded by Allah the Almighty and will be worn the best clothing of the Paradise. (Tirmidhi, Qiyama, 39) It is also normal to wear decent clothes in accordance with the financial means. It is narrated on the authority of Abdullah b. Mas'ud (r.a.) that the Apostle of Allah (pbuh), said that:

"He who has in his heart the weight of a mustard seed of pride shall not enter Paradise." A person amongst the people in the gathering said:

"Verily a person loves that his dress should be fine, and his shoes should be fine." The Prophet (pbuh) remarked:

"Verily, Allah is Graceful and He loves Grace. Pride means disdainning the truth (out of self-conceit) and contempt for the people." (Muslim, Iman, 147)

In another narration we see that the Prophet (pbuh) did not like shabby clothes. Malik b. Nadla, one of the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) narrated: "One day I went to visit the Messenger of Allah with some poor clothes on me. When the Prophet (pbuh) saw me like that, he said (to me):

"Have you any property?" I replied:

"Yes, I have."

He asked:

"What kind is it?" I said:

"Allah has given me camels, sheep, horses and slaves. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) then said:

Dırahta ger ziyân etse karınca

Zararı var mıdır ânı kırınca!?

"Is there any problem to kill ants when they harm the trees?" Abusuud replied to the Sultan's legal opinion request with the following lines:

Yarın Hakk'ın divânına varınca

Süleyman'dan hakkın alur karınca!

"When ants go to the presence of the Lord, they will get their rights from Suleiman."



“When Allah gives you property, let the mark of Allah’s favor and honor to you be seen.” (Abu Dawud, Libas, 14)

Again in a tradition of the Prophet (pbuh) known as the hadith of Jibril it is reported that when Gabriel come to the companions in a man’s form, he had black hair and was wearing a nice white garment. He had no signs of blemishes and untidiness on him. (Muslim, Iman, 1)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would prefer to wear white garments in the extent of his financial means. *“Wear white clothes; for white clothes look cleaner and nicer. Shroud your dead in white, too.”* (Tirmidhi, Adab, 46) Thus, he (pbuh) advised his followers to wear white to not only keep themselves clean and tidy but also to keep their dead clean and tidy, too.⁸⁰

In this context the following advices of the Messenger of Allah to a group of his companions, who were setting about a journey, are very meaningful: *“You are coming to your brethren; so tidy your mounts and tidy your dress, which is the sign of beauty. Allah does not like obscene words or deeds or do intentional committing of obscenity.”* (Abu Dawud, Libas, 25)

As it can be seen, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asks that believers be clean and tidy in every course of their life. This attitude also gives an opinion about our respect and love towards others. This is why our clothes should be clean and tidy.

A person’s apparel gives clues about his/her personality. Of course this is not the only factor, but it is one of the significant measures. The wise saying: “people get welcomed in accordance with their cloth and seen hospitality in accordance with their talk” is a nice statement of this. A good looking garment makes a person look dignified and receive others’ respect. This is something desired in Islam. People want to be closer to a person in nice apparel and look for ways to socialize with him/her. Thus, hearts get warm towards each other faster and one can give the message that he/she wants to give to others more easily. However, we need to distinguish the clean and tidy clothes from the clothes which manifest pride and arrogance.

80. Researches prove that colors have effects on human psychology. For instance, it is known that white inspires feelings of purification, cleanliness, and refinement; whereas, red awakens anger and temper.





What we understand from the advices and orders of the Messenger of Allah is that the determining factor in choosing clothes should not be fashion or luxury but the principle of matching and befitting to the person. The natural and normal adornments, which are required by the sexual differentiation, should not be neglected.

The Prophet (pbuh) also asked his followers to take good care of their hair. The Prophet (pbuh) saw a boy with part of his head shaved and part left unshaven. He forbade them to do that, saying:

“Shave it all or leave it all.” (Abu Dawud, Tarajjul, 3)

Allah’s Apostle (pbuh), once, asked the gender of the owner of a hand, which was extending a letter from behind the curtains. When he was told that it was a lady’s hand, he said:

“If it were, she would apply henna to her finger nails.” (Nasai, Zinat, 18) In another instance when the Prophet (pbuh) saw that Ummu Salama (r. anha), mother of the believers, folded her veil twice, he (pbuh) warned her for her veil looked like male turban saying: *“The Prophet (pbuh) came to visit her when she was veiled, and said: use one fold and not two.”* (Abu Dawud, Libas, 35) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) ordered believing women to wear lighter perfumes while believing men’s fragrances could be a little bit heavier. (Nasai, Zinat, 32)

Moreover, he did not allow men to wear silk and gold, but allowed them for women as ornaments and apparel. (Ibn Majah, Libas, 19)

The Prophet (pbuh) did not allow his ummah to wear garments with human or animal pictures on it. He stated that the angels do not enter a house which contains a picture and a dog, and asked the curtains with images to be removed from the houses. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 45)

Wearing garments made from raw hides of wild animals are also forbidden by Allah’s Messenger (pbuh). (Tirmidhi, Libas, 32; Darimi, Adahi, 19) Based upon the teachings of the Prophet (pbuh), Muslim scholars have agreed upon the permissibility to use tanned skins of all kinds of animals except pigs; for Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that: *“All skins which are made usable by tanning are pure.”* (Tirmidhi, Libas, 7)⁸¹

81. Muslim scholars have reached various conclusions as a result of their evaluations of this and similar traditions of the Prophet (pbuh). Abu Hanifa (may Allah have mercy on his soul) considered that all animal skins except pig skins become clean by tanning. Ac-



In addition to the dress code, there are some other Islamic regulations about the appearance of the believers. For instance, Muslim men are asked to keep their beards long and cut their moustaches short so as to do the opposite of what the pagans do. (Bukhari, Libas, 64) In some other narrations, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) is reported to disapprove believing men to wear clothes dyed in saffron; for these are the clothes usually worn by the non-believers and women and they may attract attention. (Muslim, Libas, 27-28)

Women are not allowed to shave their heads according to the teachings of the Prophet (pbuh). (Nasai, Zinat, 4) Removing facial hair and eyebrows, separating the teeth to look more beautiful, using false hair, and having tattoos done, thus changing the appearance created by Allah the Almighty, are all strongly forbidden by Islam. (Bukhari, 82-87)⁸²

It is reported that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) tinged his eyes with kohl named "*ismid*" and advised using kohl to his followers for it would strengthen vision and nurture eyelashes. (Abu Dawud, Libas, 13)

In short, it is understood from the orders and recommendations related to clothing that one should avoid wearing clothes against the rule of covering certain parts of the body and should try to look as good as possible in the extent of financial means. In addition, men and women should stay away from clothes that are not appropriate for their creation and clothes which may lead to arrogance or extravagance.

cording to Imam Shafii (may Allah have mercy on his soul), other than the skins of pigs, dogs, and their youngsters, all animal skins can be purified by tanning and are allowed to be used for both dry and wet works like using as water-skins. (Mubarakfuri, V, 400-401; Kâmil Mîras, *Tecrid-i Sarîh Tercümesi*, V, 301)

82. Wearing wigs just to look better and coming into the sight of foreign males are prohibited by Islam. However, wearing wig in the presence of relative males because of some health reasons, like hair loss, is permitted. For other than health reasons, wearing false hairs is not allowed on the basis of the general maxim: "lawful objects cannot be achieved by unlawful means."



C. Manners of Purification

“A Muslim’s soul, body, home, and environment should always be clean as if the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) might come to visit at any time.”

Islam persistently expresses the significance and necessity of cleanliness. Allah the Almighty praises the believers, who pay attention to material and spiritual purity, in the Qur’an saying:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“Truly Allah loves those who turn unto Him, and loves those who have a care for cleanness.” (al-Baqara 2; 222) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) invited his followers to observe the manners of purification not just through his exemplary actions but also by his sayings and advices such as: “Cleanliness is half of faith” (Muslim, Tahara, 1) “Allah is pure and He loves purity” (Tirmidhi, Adab, 41) “purification is the key of prayer” (Abu Dawud, Salat, 73).

Material cleanliness means to get cleansed from the visible filth and the things which are accepted as legally impure. Spiritual cleanliness, on the other hand, means to avoid eating illicit food, backbiting, lying. In addition it means to purify the heart from spiritual diseases like grudge, pride, bragging, greed, etc. In short, spiritual cleanliness means to purify the heart from everything other than Allah. In fact material cleanliness aims to achieve spiritual purification; for nothing but a pure heart will save people in the Hereafter. This is stated in the Qur’an as follows:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

“The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, But only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart.” (al-Shu’ara 26; 88-89)

In this chapter we will basically deal with material purification.

1. Purification from *Hadath* or Spiritual Impurity

Purification from *hadath* means cleansing impurities which are not visible but its existence is known and accepted by law. This type of purification

can be achieved by either minor or major ablution depending upon the impurity. Even though this type of purification consists of some benefits, such as cleansing the body from material filth, it is also an act of worship in itself and is considered as a preparation for other acts of worship. Allah the Almighty explains under what circumstances believers need to perform major and minor ablution as follows:

“O you who believe when you prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; rub your heads (with water); and (wash) your feet to the ankles. If you are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bath your whole body. But if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from offices of nature, or you have been in contact with women, and you find no water, then take for yourselves clean sands or earth, and rub therewith your faces and hands. Allah does not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete his favor to you, that you may be grateful.” (al-Maidah 5; 6)

As it is understood from the verse, it is obligatory for a believer to perform minor ablution when getting ready for prayer, to perform major ablution when it is needed, and to perform dry ablution in the absence of water. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) also stated that Allah will not accept prayers without performing minor ablution first. (Muslim, Taharah, 1)

Such are the basic principles that every Muslim must learn. At the end of the above mentioned verse Allah the Almighty states that the action which He orders is not meant to be a burden upon believers but to cleanse them from spiritual and material impurities and sins. Indeed purification which is necessary for every human being is turned into an act of worship in Islam; thus while cleansing oneself, one can feel the joy of worshipping, too.

2. Purification from Material Impurity

Purification from material impurities can be achieved by purifying the body, clothes, and the place of worship from all kinds of dirt. One should especially pay attention to the manners in the bathroom. In this context some of the principles of manners existing in the teachings of the Prophet (pbuh) are as follows:





1. When going to the bathroom, one should take off ornaments, on which have some sacred inscriptions, like the name of Allah or name of the Prophet (pbuh); because when the Prophet (pbuh) entered the privy, he removed his ring, on which *kalimat al-tawhid* was written. (Abu Dawud, Taharah, 10)

2. Based on the recommendations of the Prophet (pbuh) when entering the privy, one should say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْخُبْثِ وَالْخَبَائِثِ

“O Allah, I seek refuge in You from wicked and noxious things.” (Muslim, Haid, 122)

And when getting out, one should make the following supplication:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنِّي الْأَذَى وَعَافَانِي

“Praises be to Allah, who relieved me from this burden and bestowed wellness upon me.” (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 10)

3. One should not turn towards the qiblah when easing oneself or urinating. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) made the following warning in this regard: *“When one of you goes to the bathroom, he/she should not face the qiblah at the time of easing or urinating.”* (Bukhari, Wudu, 10)

4. One should not relieve oneself standing; for such an act can cause drops of urine to spatter on one’s body or clothes. Aisha (r.anha) stated that Allah’s Messenger had never relieved himself standing. Ibn Abbas (r. anhumah) reported:

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) happened to pass by two graves and said:

“Both of them are being tormented, but they are not tormented for a grievous sin. One of them carried people’s words against each other and the other did not keep himself safe from being defiled by urine.”

He then called for a fresh twig and split it into two parts, and planted them on each grave and then said:

“Perhaps, their punishment be lessened as long as these twigs remain fresh.” (Muslim, Taharah, 111)



It is also a fact that relieving oneself standing may also cause health problems such as some kidney problems.⁸³

5. One should not hold their private parts with their right hand when relieving themselves, and should clean themselves with their left hand afterwards. This is stated in a prophetic saying: *“Whenever anyone of you makes water he should not hold or clean his private parts with his right hand.”* (Bukhari, Wudu, 19)

6. If it is possible, after relieving oneself the cleaning should be done with water. This was what the Prophet (pbuh) preferred. (Bukhari, Wudu, 15-17) We see that the people of the city of Quba are praised by Allah the Almighty in the Qur’an. According to the narration, when the verse: **“In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loves those who make themselves pure.”** (al-Tawbah 9; 108) was revealed, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) went to the residents of Quba and asked:

“O people of Ansar! Allah the Almighty praises your purification. How do you cleanse yourselves?” They replied:

“We perform minor ablution before prayer, we perform major ablution, when we are in a state of canonical impurity, we perform major ablution and we cleanse ourselves after urinating with water.” Upon this Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) told them:

“This is why you are praised. Continue to do this.” (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 28)

Allah the Almighty’s praises for the people of Quba in this verse, and the encouraging words of the Prophet (pbuh) clearly show that performing purification is among the Islamic manners of purification. Using paper or other materials are not enough to perform a proper cleansing. Wiping down after cleansing with water is also a nice thing to do.

7. Not to talk or not to show private parts to others are also among the manners. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated that Allah, the Great and Majestic, becomes wrathful at those who are not careful about these actions. (Abu Dawud, Taharah, 7)

83. According to expert statements, when one relieves oneself in a squatting position, the urinary bladder completely relaxes and releases everything in it together with urine. Whereas, since relieving oneself standing strains the bladder and it causes some of the material to block the urinary tracts which causes infections.





8. Also, among the manner for males is not to perform ablution right after urinating and to wait for a while; because this makes sure that nothing is left in the urinary bladder. Thus, minor ablution will not be damaged. (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 19) In this context, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) also advised men to hold their penis and squeeze it from back to front three times after relieving themselves. (Ibn Maja, Taharah, 19; Ibn Hanbal, IV, 347)

9. Those who are at open places should avoid relieving themselves on roads, under the shades, at picnic places, in stagnant waters, and on animal and insect nests. Abu Huraira (r.a.) reported:

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Be on your guard against two things which provoke Divine cursing.”

The companions present there said:

“O Messenger of Allah, what are those things which provoke cursing?”
He said:

“Easing on the thoroughfares or under the shades where they take shelter and rest.” (Muslim, Taharah, 68)

Jabir (r.a.) said that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) forbade urinating in stagnant water. (Muslim, Taharah, 94)

Abdullah ibn Sarjis stated that the Prophet (pbuh) prohibited urinating in animal and insect holes. (Abu Dawud, Taharah, 16)

3. Cleaning the Body from Various Secretions

In addition to the above mentioned spiritual and material impurities, cleansing the body from filth, smells, and everything that causes them is also among the customs of the Prophet (pbuh). It is also specifically suggested by the Prophet (pbuh) that every Muslim should take a bath at least once a week, preferably on Fridays. Some narrations related to this matter are as follows:

“Allah's Apostle (pbuh) said, “Anyone of you attending the Friday (prayers) should take a bath.” (Bukhari, Jum'a, 2)

“Allah's Apostle (pbuh) said, “Any person who takes a bath on Friday like the bath of Janaba (canonical impurity) and then goes for the prayer in



the first hour gains spiritual rewards as if he had sacrificed a camel in Allah's cause; ...” (Bukhari, Jum’a, 4)

When we examine these sayings, we see that taking a bath on Fridays is not obligatory but going to Friday prayer after performing major ablution helps to perform the prayer with a peaceful mind and also leads to gaining spiritual rewards. Performing major ablution close to the time of Friday prayer helps the mind and body to get ready to go to the mosque. However, one can realize the tradition of performing major ablution on Fridays by taking a bath at an earlier hour.

In addition to performing minor ablution before the five daily prayers, washing hands before and after every meal are among the manners of purification. (Tirmidhi, At’imah, 39) Similarly, cutting one’s nails, shortening one’s beard and moustache, and brushing one’s teeth are among some of the teachings of the Prophet. According to the narration of Abu Huraira (r.a.) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“Five practices are among the customs of the prophets: circumcision, shaving the pubic hair, cutting the moustaches short, clipping the nails, and depilating the hair of the armpits.” (Bukhari, Libas, 63-64)

In another report these five issues, which can be considered among the natural requirements of being a human, are seen to be increased to ten. (Muslim, Taharah, 56) By considering these two reports we can enumerate the actions, which are mentioned as the characteristics of human nature as follows:

a. Circumcision (Hitan): It is one of the signs of being a Muslim. The time of circumcision begins on the seventh day after birth and continues till puberty. However, the most appropriate time is to do it after the child becomes aware of being circumcised.

In addition to be a natural necessity, circumcision is also healthy and beneficial because it helps to balance sexual feelings. Today the benefits of circumcision are known better and the number of circumcised males for health reasons is increasing in Christian countries.

b. Clipping fingernails: Fingernails should be shortened to the extent that will not hurt the fingers. Since there is no specific time for cutting fingernails, they can be shortened whenever it is needed. There is no such day that clipping fingernails is prohibited. However, there are reports that the Prophet





(pbuh) liked to cut his fingernails on Fridays. (Haythami, II, 170; Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, III, 244)

One should be careful while cutting one's nails and should not leave pieces of their nails around.

Today some women prolong their fingernails for different reasons. It is obvious that such an action is against the Islamic manners. Filth may gather under the nails, which is really dangerous for the human health. It is especially not a nice situation for those women who cook in the kitchen.

Abu Wasil narrated:

"I met Abu Ayyub al-Ansari. We shook hands. When he saw that I had long finger nails, he told me that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) had said:

"There are those among you who are interested in the news of the heavens, whereas their fingernails are as long as the nails of the birds that filth and impurities infested under them." (Ibn Hanbal, V, 427)

c. Shaving armpits: Cleansing the armpit hairs can be done either by shaving, plucking, or using different chemicals to remove the hairs. It is appropriate to begin with the right armpit.

d. Shaving pubic hair (*Istihdad*): Shaving pubic hair is also among the characteristics of human nature. Intentionally neglecting to perform the bodily cleansing is not an appropriate behavior for it causes one to quit the teachings of the Prophet.

e. Shortening the moustache: It is a nice habit to shorten the moustache so that the upper lip appears and to shorten it starting with the right side. It is not an approved behavior to prolong the moustache so that it covers the mouth and goes down from the sides of the lips; also one should be careful not to smudge food or drink to his moustache.

f. Prolonging the beard: Shaving the entire beard is not seen as an appropriate action for Muslim men. If the beard gets too long and presents an ugly appearance, there is a consensus that it can be shortened from length and width. Actually trimming what is more than a fistful of the beard is considered as the tradition of the Prophet (pbuh).

g. Cleaning teeth with *miswak*: *Miswak* is the name of soft branches of the Arak tree. The word *siwak* is also used in the traditions of the Prophet



in the same meaning. The term *siwak* is also used as verb meaning to brush the teeth. Advices of the Prophet (pbuh) related to the brushing teeth are very meaningful for Muslims. Some of them are as follows:

“If I had not found it hard for my followers or the people, I would have ordered them to clean their teeth with the siwak before every prayer.” (Bukhari, Jum’a, 8)

“Using the siwak is a reason to keep the mouth clean and to attain Lord’s pleasure.” (Ibn Majah, Taharah, 7)

Aisha (r. anha) said that:

“We would prepare the Prophet’s *miswak* and ablution water at night. Allah would wake him up in the middle of the night. As soon as he wakes up, he would brush his teeth, perform his ablution and pray.” (Muslim, Musafirun, 139)

Miqdam b. Shuraih narrated it from his father who said:

“I asked Aisha what Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) did first when he entered his house, and she replied: first of all he would use a *siwak*.” (Muslim, Taharah, 43-44)

Evaluation of the traditions related to this matter shows that brushing his teeth occupied a very important place in the Prophet’s life. These traditions need to be understood as cleansing the mouth and teeth. In other words, the *miswak* is not mandatory to use to cleanse the mouth. However, if one has a *miswak* they should use it because it has many benefits. Those who cannot find one may achieve the same purification by using a toothbrush and toothpaste. They may even use their fingers for a temporary cleansing.

h. Inhaling water into nostrils (*istinshaq*): Cleansing the nostrils by inhaling water into it is another prophetic custom. Since this is one of the obligatory actions of major ablution, it should not be forgotten during its performance.

i. Washing between the knuckles: It is among the customs of the Prophet (pbuh) to cleanse places like between knuckles and earlap, which may hold filth.

k. Rinsing mouth (*madmamdah*): In addition to brushing the teeth, rinsing the mouth with water was a custom of the Prophet (pbuh).





4. Cleaning the Environment

Just as showing great care to his/her personal hygiene and purification, a Muslim should pay the utmost attention to cleanliness of his/her home, neighborhood, and the entire environment in general. A Muslim's home should be clean and tidy as if the Prophet (pbuh) was going to come for a visit. Everything should be placed in its appropriate place and should not cause any disturbance.

Displaying unpleasant scenes, which are not befitting to a believer, especially at the gates of the great Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina should not be allowed to happen. Especially those Muslims who are there for pilgrimage must be careful in this respect.

There are many advices of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) about environmental sanitation. For instance, Malik b. Anas (r.a.) reported that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) saw spittle on the wall that faced towards the *qibla*, and he personally scratched it away. The signs of his anger could be seen in his face. (Muslim, Masajid, 52; Baihaqi, *Sunan al-Kubra*, I, 255) Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wanted his followers to be polite, nice, and clean and to stay away from manifesting acts contrary to this. Therefore, a believer should especially stay away from disgusting acts like spitting around on places. In another saying, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

"The deeds of my people, good and bad, were presented before me, and I found the removal of something objectionable from the road among their good deeds, and the spit left unburied in the mosque among their evil deeds." (Muslim, Masajid, 58)⁸⁴

This narration discusses spitting in the mosques which were done by people. Mosques are not just places where believers worship Allah but they are also gathering places. Believers who pay attention to cleanliness of these places will also pay the utmost attention to cleanliness on roads, streets, and the environment; for keeping such places clean is also among the commands of Islam. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) specifically mentioned this in his sayings and characterized the removal of what is injurious from a path as a branch of faith. (Muslim, Iman, 58) From this point of view, not just spitting around on

84. At that time there were no carpets in the mosques, but the ground was covered with sand. This is why people spitting in the mosques were seen from time to time.



places but also all kinds of disturbing actions such as littering, parking cars in wrong places, leaving materials that would block people's passages should all be avoided.

D. Manners of Knocking on Doors and Asking Permission to Enter

“Allah’s Apostle said, “If anyone of you asks the permission to enter thrice, and the permission is not given, then he should return.”

(Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 13)

In our daily life we enter various places. Of course this has to be within the frame of certain manners. In this context, the Holy Qur’an addresses us as follows:

“O you who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that you may heed (what is seemly).” (al-Nur 24; 27)

Asking permission to enter a house or a similar place is based on the principle of protecting privacy. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) clearly stated this issue in the following tradition: *“Verily! The order of taking permission to enter has been enjoined because of that sight, (that one should not look unlawfully at the state of others).”* (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 11)

According to the statement of the above tradition, violation of privacy can occur not only by entering a house without permission but also by unlawfully looking into it. Therefore, when one attempts to ask permission to enter a place, he should stay on the right or left side of the door in accordance with the customs of the Prophet (pbuh). (Abu Dawud, Adab, 127)

What is worse is to peek through the key holes or to look through the windows and to spy on the people inside. These are not behaviors befitting a true believer. For such an action is moral lowness and a psychological disorder from the point of the peeking person and a cause of discomfort and embarrassment from the point of the person who is being watched.

Sahl b. Sa’d (r.a.) reported that a person peeped through the hole of the door of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh), and at that time Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had a comb in his hand. When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) recognized him he said:





“If I were to know that you had been peeping through the door, I would have thrust this into your eyes,” and Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“Permission is needed as a protection against glance.” (Muslim, Adab, 40-41)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated how great a crime and a sin peeping is by saying that: *“He who peeped into the house of people without their consent, it is permissible for them to put out his eyes.”* (Muslim, Adab, 43) Here the permissibility of putting someone’s eyes out is just to explain how immoral and bad such an action is.⁸⁵

Since houses in the age of happiness were one storey simple buildings built from palm branches, people could enter other people’s houses easily by asking permission saying, *“al-salam alaikum! May I enter?”* We also see that the Prophet (pbuh) scolded the companions who did not observe this manner.

It was narrated Kaladah ibn Hanbal:

“Safwan b. Umayyah sent him with some milk, a young gazelle and some small cucumbers to the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) when he was in the upper part of Mecca. I entered but I neither asked permission nor gave a salutation. The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Go back and say: “Peace be upon you”!” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 127)

A man of Banu Amir recalled that he asked the Prophet (pbuh) for permission to enter the house when he was in the house, saying:

“May I enter?” The Prophet (pbuh) said to his servant:

“Go out to this man and teach him how to ask permission to enter the house, and say to him: “Say: Peace be upon you. May I enter?”

The man heard it and said:

85. Peeping at other people’s intimate states is an ugly behavior which nobody approves. Because nobody would like his/her home or privacy invaded. This tradition shows strong disapproval of the Messenger of Allah in this regard. In time peeping at other people’s secrets turns into a bad disease. Islam wants to prevent such bad habits either before its emergence or before it gets worse. This is why it prohibits even a little amount of something whose great amount is prohibited. Based on this principle, to drink a small amount of alcoholic beverages is banned even though it does not make a person drunk. Through such a fierce threat Islam wants to prevent such bad actions such as peeping into other people’s houses.



“Peace be upon you! May I enter?” The Prophet (pbuh) permitted him and he entered. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 127)

Because today’s buildings and doors are built differently than the ones in the age of happiness, it might be more difficult to make one’s salutation heard by the owner of the house. In fact out of necessity today people use doorbells for asking permission instead of saluting at the door. However, one may also follow the custom of the Prophet (pbuh) if he/she salutes the owner of the house when he/she opens the door.

Moreover, one should repeat knocking the door three times at most and if he does not get an answer he should not insist. This is stated in a verse as follows:

“If you find no one in the house, enter not until permission is given to you: if you are asked to go back, go back: that makes for greater purity for yourselves: and Allah knows well all that you do.” (al-Nur 24; 28)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that: *“If anyone of you asks the permission to enter thrice, and the permission is not given, then he should return.”* (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 13) However, if a person thinks that the owner of the house did not hear the knocking, he/she may knock the door more.

It is not appropriate to use obscure statements while asking permission like to answer the question of “who is it?” as “it’s me;” because it is not always possible to recognize people from their voices, even if it is an acquaintance. Whereas, a question such as “who are you?” or “who is it?” implies the questioner’s wish to know the person at his/her door. Responses like “it’s me” “a man,” “someone,” “a servant of Allah,” and “someone you know,” are not enough to meet that wish. The following narration clearly warns us in this context:

Jabir (r.a.) narrated:

“I came to the Prophet in order to consult him regarding my father’s debt. When I knocked on the door, he asked, “Who is it?” I replied, “me” He said,

“*Me, me?*” He repeated it as if he disliked it. (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 17)⁸⁶

86. Interpreters of this tradition also pointed out the following indicative meaning. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) did not approve Jabir to say “me”; because the word “me” consists of egoism, pride, and seeing oneself superior to others. Jalal-al-Din Rumi explained this tradition as follows: *“A certain man came and knocked at a friend’s door: his friend asked*



In other reports we see that the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) answered the Prophet's question "who are you?" as "I am such and such" adding his name into his response. (Bukhari, Riqaq, 13) Therefore, we should use such expressions that show our identity clearly even if we are knocking at our own door.

From the above mentioned narrations and evaluations, we see that there are certain manners that every Muslim should follow especially when asking permission to enter a place. He/she should let the members of the household know about his/her identity and receive their kind reception. Acting contrary to these manners is not appropriate for a true believer.

Moreover, one should follow certain manners in entering the rooms in his/her home. For instance, the following verse states that servants and children cannot go into bedrooms at certain times of the day without asking permission first:

"O you who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess, and the (children) among you who have not come of age ask your permission (before they come to your presence), on three occasions: before morning prayer; the while you doff your clothes for the noonday heat; and after the late night prayer: these are your three times of undress: outsides those times it is not wrong for you or for them to move about attending to each other: thus does Allah make clear the Signs to you: for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom." (al-Nur 24; 58)

Like adults, children who are at the age of puberty should ask permission every time they want to go into the bedrooms. This is mentioned in the Qur'an as follows: **"But when the children among you come of age, let them (also) ask for permission, as do those senior to them (in age) ..."** (al-Nur 24; 59)

him, "Who are you, O trusty one?" He answered, "I." The friend said, "Begone, it is not the time for you to come in: at a table like this there is no place for the raw." Save the fire of absence and separation, who/what will cook the raw one? Who/what will deliver him from hypocrisy? The wretched man went away, and for a year in travel and in separation from his friend he was burned with sparks of fire. That burned one was cooked: then he returned and again paced to and fro beside the house of his comrade. He knocked at the door with a hundred fears and respects, lest any disrespectful word might escape from his lips. His friend called to him, "Who is at the door?" He answered, "It is You are at the door, O charmer of hearts." "Now," said the friend, "since you are I, come in, O myself: there is not room in the house for two I's. The double end of thread is not for the needle: inasmuch as you are single, come into this needle." (Mathnawi, I, verses: 3056-3064)



The narration below is very illustrative in this matter. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was questioned by a man who said,

“O Messenger of Allah, shall I ask permission from my mother to enter?”
He said,

“Yes”

The man said, “I live with her in the house.”

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said

“Ask her permission.” The man said,

“I am at his continuous service.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said,

“Ask her permission. Do you want to see her naked?” He said, “No.” He said,

“Then ask her permission.” (Muwatta, Isti’dhan, 1)

In conclusion, even close relatives and family members should be careful while entering into their houses and especially when entering each other’s rooms. They should not neglect to get each other’s permission.

E. Manners of Salutation

“When a (courteous) greeting is offered to you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or (at least) of equal courtesy.”

(Al-Nisa 4; 86)

Salutation is one of the means of Islam to establish respect and love in the Muslim society. Abu Huraira (r.a.) reported: The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said that:

“You shall not enter Paradise so long as you do not affirm belief in all those things which are the articles of faith and you will not believe as long as you do not love one another. Would you like me to direct you to a thing which, if you do, will foster love amongst you: (i.e.) give currency to the practice of paying salutation to one another by saying as-salamu alaikum –peace be upon you.” (Muslim, Iman, 73)



The word *salam* means to be saved from all kinds of troubles of this world and the Hereafter and to attain happiness. Therefore, when believers greet each other, they ask for each other's happiness both in this world and in the Hereafter. According to the above mentioned tradition, salutation has a close connection with the existence of faith and love, which are considered as the foundations of peace and tranquility. **"al-Salam"** is also one of the names of Allah the Almighty. In other words, He is the One Who is free from all deficiencies, Who saves His servants from all kinds of dangers, and Who will greet His fortunate servants in Paradise.

Salam is like a password amongst believers. Indeed this is mentioned in the verse below:

"...say not to anyone who offers you a salutation: you are not a Believer..." (al-Nisa 4; 94) Greetings of the believers given in this world will be current in the Hereafter, too. Their greetings will even be replied by Allah the Almighty and the angels. This is expressed in some verses as follows:

"They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of peace: and they will have therein their sustenance, morning and evening." (Maryam 19; 62)

"The word from a Merciful Lord (for them) is: Peace!" (Yasin 36; 58)

"...The angels enter unto them from every gate. (Saying): Peace be unto you because you persevered..." (al-Ra'd 13; 23-24)

According to the customs of the Prophet (pbuh), salutation is given by saying "*as-salamu alaikum – peace be upon you (plural)*" or "*as-salamu alai-ka – peace be upon you (singular)*" and the addressee replies saying "*wa-alai-kum-salam - and peace be upon you (plural)*" or "*wa-alaika as-salam - and peace be upon you (singular)*." Expressions like "*wa-rahmatullah – and Allah's Mercy*" or "*wa-rahmatullahi wa-barakatuhu – and Allah's Mercy and Blessings*" may be added to the response. Salutations of other religious groups are usually done by some gestures and movement of the head and hands. For instance, Christians put their hand to their mouth; and Jews greet by doing finger movements or bowing their heads and waist down. Arabs before Islam used expressions like "may your morning be nice," "may your morning be bright," and "may your night be good." There are interesting similarities with those greetings and the greetings used today such as "good morning" and

good afternoon” etc. It should be noted that these expressions are neither ugly nor bad, but they can never replace the greetings advised by Islam. What is suitable for a believer is to follow the manners of greetings established by the Messenger of Allah.

Who will greet whom and according to what rules are explained by the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

“Allah’s Apostle said, “The young should greet the old, and the riding one should greet the walking one, and the walking one should greet the sitting one, and the small number of persons should greet the large number of persons.” (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 5-6)

When people at the same age and level meet each other, the one who greets first will be the one who gains more spiritual rewards. This is expressed in a saying of the Prophet (pbuh) as follows: *“Those who are nearest to Allah are they who are first to give a salutation.”* (Abu Dawud, Adab 133)

Just like greeting a congregation when entering, one should greet it when leaving. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“When one of you comes to an assembly, he should give a salutation and if he feels inclined to get up, he should give a salutation, for the former is not more of a duty than the latter.” (Abu Dawud, Adab 139)

As it is suggested by the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) that those who walk around the Muslim neighborhood should salute everybody he meets, acquaintance or stranger. The first steps of understanding and comingling start with greetings between two believers, who are strangers to each other; because they meet at the strongest common point or the brotherhood in Islam. This is why salutation is strongly recommended by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).

According to the narration of Abdullah bin Amr (r.anhuma), a person asked Allah’s Apostle: “What (sort of) deeds in or (what qualities of) Islam are good?” He replied,

“To feed (the poor) and greet those whom you know and those whom you do not know.” (Bukhari, Iman, 20)

In another report narrated by Abdullah b. Umar (r. anhuma) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that: *“spread salutation amongst you, feed the poor and*





the needy so be brothers as it is commanded by Allah the Almighty.” (Ibn Majah, At’imah, 1)

In small towns where the majority of the population is Muslim, paying salutations might not be difficult; but in big cities where the population is diverse, saying greetings to everyone one meets might be a problem. Still one should try to follow the teachings of the Prophet (pbuh) by greeting the people around his/her neighborhood and workplace.

In order to pay salutation one should benefit from the slightest possibilities. Even if two people come across each other in short intervals, they should not show laziness or negligence in repeating salutations. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that: *“When one of you meets his brother, he should salute him, then if he meets him again after a tree, wall or stone has come between them, he should also salute him.”* (Abu Dawud, Adab, 135)

One should be as courteous as possible in responding to the greetings or at least should respond in the same manner. For instance, the response to the greetings of someone who says *“salam alaikum”* can be either with some additional expressions like *“wa alaikum salam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh”* or in same expressions *“wa alaikum salam.”* It is expressed in a verse:

“When a (courteous) greeting is offered you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or (at least) of equal courtesy. Allah takes careful account of all things.” (al-Nisa 4; 86)

Muslim scholars deduced from this verse that paying salutation is a Sunnah of the Prophet; whereas responding to it is obligatory upon believers. According to the narration of Abu Hurairah, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“When Allah created Adam, He said to him, “Go and greet that group of angels, and listen to their reply, for it will be your salutation and the greeting of your offspring.” So, Adam said to the angels, “As-Salamu Alaikum (i.e. Peace be upon you)”. The angels said, “As-salamu Alaika wa Rahmatu-llahi” (i.e. Peace and Allah’s Mercy be upon you). Thus the angels added to Adam’s salutation the expression, “Wa Rahmatu-llahi,” (Bukhari, Anbiya, 1)

Aisha (r.anha) narrated:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told me:

“This is Gabriel (pbuh). He salutes you.” And I replied:



“Wa alaihis-salam wa rahmatullahi wa-barakatuh.” (Bukhari, Bad’ul Khalk, 6)

Giving and replying to the salutation with additional expressions, i.e. *alaikum-salam wa rahmatullahi wa-barakatuh*, causes to gain more spiritual rewards. Imran b. Husain (r.a.) narrated:

“A man came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said:

“al-salam alaikum - Peace be upon you!” The Prophet (pbuh) responded to his salutation. He then sat down and said:

“Rewarded by ten.” Another man came and said:

“al-salam alaikum wa rahmatullah - Peace and Allah’s mercy be upon you!” The Prophet (pbuh) responded to his salutation when he sat down and then said:

“Rewarded by twenty.” Another man came and said:

“al-salam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa-barakatuh - Peace and Allah’s mercy and blessings be upon you!” He (pbuh) responded to him and said when he sat down:

“Rewarded by thirty.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 131-132)

When someone enters his/her home, he/she should say his/her greetings to his/her family, just like when entering somebody else’s place. In this regard, he/she should not be stingy towards his/her family members. Anas (r.a.) said that:

“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told me”

“My son! Pay your salutation to your household when you enter your home so that your greetings become blessings for you and your family.” (Tirmidhi, Isti’dhan, 10) It is stated in a verse: **“...But when you enter houses, salute one another with a greeting from Allah, blessed and sweet...”** (al-Nur 24; 61) According to this verse, one should even greet himself/herself when entering his/her home even when there is nobody in it. Then the expression of the salutation will be as *“as-salamu alaina wa ala ibadillahi-s-salihin* – peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of Allah.” (Muwatta, Salam, 8)

When one meets with non-Muslims, he/she should not salute them. If they salute first, he/she should reply to their salutations just by saying *“wa-alaikum – and upon you.”* Ibn Umar (r.anhuma) reported Allah’s Mes-





senger (pbuh) as saying: *“Do not be the first one to salute Jews and Christians.”* (Muslim, Salam, 13)

Anas (r.a.) reported that the Companions of Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said to him:

“When the People of the Book offer us their salutations, how should we reciprocate them?” Thereupon he said:

“Say: *Wa Alaikum* (and upon you too)”. (Muslim, Salam, 7)

The following incident narrated by Aisha (r.anha), mother of the believers, clearly shows why the Prophet (pbuh) exhibited such attitude towards non-believers.

“A group of Jews entered upon the Prophet and said,

“As-Samu-Alaikum - (i.e. death be upon you).” I understood it and said,

“Wa-Alaikum As-Samu wal-la’n - (death and the curse be upon you).” Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said:

“Be calm, O Aisha! Allah loves to be kind and lenient in all matters.” I said:

“O Allah’s Apostle! Haven’t you heard what they (the Jews) have said?” Upon this Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said:

“I have (already) responded (to them): And upon you!” (Bukhari, Adab, 35)

However, one may pay his/her salutation to a mixed group, where Muslims and non-Muslims happen to be together. Because it is reported that the Prophet (pbuh) passed by a group consisted of Muslim, polytheists, and Jews and greeted them. (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 20)

If there is no possibility of misconception, it is permitted for men to greet women and vice versa. In fact, Allah’s Apostle greeted a group of women waiting in the mosque. (Tirmidhi, Isti’dhan, 9) In addition, there is a report that Umm Habiba, the daughter of the Prophet’s uncle, greeted him. (Muslim, Musafirun, 82) We also see in the sources that companions greeted an old lady, who was serving them. (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 16)

One should salute the children, too. It is among the reports of the companions that the Prophet (pbuh) would salute children and would not neglect it.



For instance, it is narrated by Anas bin Malik that he passed by a group of boys and greeted them and said, “The Prophet used to do so.” (Bukhari, Isti’dhan, 15)

There are some situations that one should not pay his/her salutations:

- One should not greet a person who is relieving himself/herself or committing a sin such as drinking alcohol or gambling.
- Again it is not suggested to salute someone who is in the middle of performing an act of worship, like performing ablution, praying, or reciting the Holy Qur’an.

F. Manners of Shaking Hands

“The Prophet (pbuh) said: If two Muslims meet, shake hands, praise Allah, and ask Him for forgiveness, they will be forgiven.”

Abu Dawud, Adab, 142

Musafaha means shaking hands. When believers meet, it is among the nice manners suggested to the believers to greet each other and then shake hands. To turn away from a person who extends his hand and not to accept his hand is something against Islamic manners. Indeed in a prophetic saying shaking hands is described as the complement of greeting. (Tirmidhi, Isti’dhan, 31) Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) accepted all hands extended to him, and never pulled his hand back unless the other person pulled it first. He (pbuh) also did not turn his face away as long as his addressee did not turn away. (Tirmidhi, Qiyamah, 46)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) encouraged believers to shake hands in his following saying:

“If two Muslims meet, shake hands, praise Allah, and ask Him for forgiveness, they will be forgiven.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 142)

Forgiveness mentioned in this saying does not consist of great sins like the rights of other human beings but only little sins. Receiving such a great reward for such a small act proves how significant shaking hands is. Similarly, a nice word (Ibn Hanbal, II, 316) or even a little smile will be written in the rewards sections of a believer’s deeds. (Tirmidhi, Birr, 36) Because love and beautiful friendships amongst people will grow through such good attributes.





In addition to shaking hands, hugging (*muanaqa*) friends, especially those who come from far away places, and kissing the hand or forehead are permissible actions. Aisha (r.anha) narrated that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) welcomed, hugged, and kissed Zaid b. Haritha (r.a), who had come to Medina from out of town. (Tirmidhi, Isti'dhan, 32)

Again the Prophet (pbuh) hugged and kissed Ja'far (r.a.), who had come back from Abyssinia, between his eyes. (Ibn Hisham, III, 414)

According to the narration of Ibn Umar (r. anhum), Allah's Messenger (pbuh) let his companions kiss his hand. (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 96; Adab, 148) The following incident narrated by Safwan b. Assal (r.a.) proves that kissing hands might be an appropriate behavior under certain circumstances:

"A Jew told his Jewish friend:

"Take us to that Prophet." His friend replied:

"Do not call him a prophet. If he hears you, he would be very happy and his eyes would shine with joy." Then they came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked the nine commands (which are common between Jews and Muslims). Allah's Messenger (pbuh) replied:

"You shall not attribute partners to Allah, you shall not steal, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not unjustly kill the innocent, you shall not take an innocent person to a statesman to be executed, you shall not engage in sorcery, you shall not deal with usury, you shall not slander a chaste woman; you shall not run away from battlefield. And the last one just for you, the Jews, you shall not violate the Sabbath day." Upon this they kissed the Prophet's hand and feet and said:

"We bear witness that you are a true Prophet." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked:

"Then what prevents you to follow me?" They replied:

"David (pbuh) always prayed to his Lord to be blessed with a prophet from his offspring. If we follow you, we are afraid that Jews might kill us." (Tirmidhi, Isti'dhan, 33)

Under the light of these and similar reports Muslim scholars said that it is permissible to kiss someone's hand, who is distinguished by his knowledge,



piety, dignity, trustworthiness, and justice. However, it is not permitted to kiss someone's hand because of his wealth. (Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, 57)

It is forbidden to shake hands with the opposite sex, if he/she is in the category with which one can marry. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) especially avoided to shake hands with women when they took an oath of allegiance (Bukhari, Talak, 20) and said *"I do not shake hands with women."* (Ibn Majah, Jihad, 43) However, in the modern era we see some Muslims who follow the wrong customs and do not pay enough attention to this matter; whereas, what is appropriate for the believers is to obey the Messenger of Allah in every aspect of their lives.

G. Manners of Speech

"Do not say something for which you have to apologize."

Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 15

Speech is a wonderful divine blessing which enables people to communicate, love, and socialize with each other. People usually express their feelings, thoughts, and wishes through speaking. A person's language and wording may make him/her either very successful or be a disappointment among others. Being careful of what one says and one's language is even enumerated among the things to attain Paradise. Allah's Apostle (pbuh) said that,

"Whoever can guarantee the chastity of what is between his two jaw-bones and what is between his two legs (i.e. his tongue and his private parts), I guarantee Paradise for him." (Bukhari, Riqaq, 23) In another saying, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) replied to the question of "who is more virtuous?" with the following answer:

"He is the one who avoids harming the Muslims with his tongue and hands." (Bukhari, Iman, 4-5) Allah's Messenger (pbuh) established some principles about the Islamic manners of speech:

1. To speak clearly and intelligibly and in accordance with the level of the addressee; and when it is necessary, one should repeat significant parts of his/her speech. In this context, the following evaluations of the companions about the fluency and clarity of the Prophet's speech are very important:





“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) spoke in a distinct manner so that anyone who listened to him could understand it.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 18)

“When the Prophet (pbuh) spoke, those who would like to count his words could count them.” (Bukhari, Manaqib, 23)

“He would repeat the words and sentences three times that he wanted to be clearly understood.” (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 9)

In order to let the addressee understand the matter better sometimes one may need to repeat his/her words. In the Qur'an some events are repeated a few times because of their significance and thus believers should draw their attentions to them. For instance, Satan's rebellious behavior against the Divine command and refusal of prostration is repeated in seven places; and the incident about the sorcerers who believed in Moses (pbuh) is repeated in four places in the Qur'an.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would repeat some verses while leading a prayer two or three times. When sermonizing and warning his companions Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would repeat some expressions. The same approach can frequently be observed in the sermons of the friends of Allah. However, this should be with the purpose of teaching and in accordance with the level of the listeners; it also should not be boring.

It would be a waste of breath to speak in a congregation where no one is able to comprehend the speech.

2. It is strongly forbidden to give speeches with the purpose of pedantry and seeing oneself superior than others and to use expressions which people could not understand. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) said that,

“Allah, the Exalted, hates the eloquent one among men who moves his tongue round (among his teeth), as cattle do (use a pompous language).” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 94)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh), whose mission was to convey the truth to humanity, never had artistic concerns in his speeches. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh) always talked with the purest and most honest expressions that came from his heart, which added quite a different beauty and eloquence to his speech.

3. One should not utter in a loud voice. It is not appropriate to speak in an angry tone like there is a deaf person before him/her. Adopting a polite manner



is always the most appropriate choice in speech. According to the statement of the Qur'an, Luqman (pbuh) taught his son the manner of speech as follows:

“Be modest in your bearing and subdue your voice. Lo! The harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass.” (Luqman 31; 19) In another verse, it is stated that:

وَقُلْ لِعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

“Say to my servants that they should (only) say those things that are best...” (al-Isra 17; 53) Allah the Exalted ordered Moses and Aaron (peace be upon them) to use a mild language to warn the Pharaoh. (Taha 20; 43-44) Therefore, one should be careful about his/her way of speech even if his/her addressee is a non-Muslim. It is expressed in a tradition of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) that one might save himself/herself from Hellfire because of a pleasant word:

“He who among you can protect himself against Fire, he should do so, even if it should be with half a date and he who does not find it, (he should do so) with pleasant words.” (Muslim, Zakat, 68)

4. In a group of three it is prohibited that two of them speak secretly and exclude the third person. The Prophet (pbuh) said that such a behavior might grieve the third person. (Bukhari, Isti'dhan, 47) And a mature believer would not like to do something which might hurt his/her Muslim brother or sister.

5. When a subject is discussed or a question is asked in a group the person who has the right to speak first is the person who is the oldest one of the group; however others might also express their opinions. Indeed when Abdurrahman bin Sahl (r.a.) began to talk, the Prophet said (to him), *“Let the eldest of you speak. Let the eldest of you speak.”* as Abdurrahman was the youngest thus the eldest ones talked about the matter. (Bukhari, Jizya, 12)

Abdullah b. Umar (r. anhum) narrated:

“One day Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked his companions:

“Tell me a tree, which resembles the believers.” Companions, who were present there, counted all the trees of the desert one by one. I thought about the date tree and wanted to say it; but I did not speak up for there were elders in



the group. When they could not figure it out, the Prophet (pbuh) said that the answer was the date tree.” (Muslim, Munafiqun, 64)

6. Speech should be brief and to the point. One should avoid unnecessary details. In other words, one should form the habit of speaking wisely and properly. Allah the Almighty states one of the distinguished features of the believers in the Qur’an saying, **“And (the believers) who shun vain conversation...”** (al-Mu’minun 23; 3) thus dealing with vain speech is characterized among the signs of sinners. (Luqman 31; 6)

The Prophet (pbuh) attracts our attention to this matter as follows:

“Do not speak much without mentioning Allah in your speech. Speaking about something other than Allah hardens the heart. And there is no doubt that those who have hardened hearts are the farthest ones from Allah.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 62)

“It is the perfection of a believer to leave the matters, which do not directly concern him.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 11)

7. One should strongly stay away from harmful speeches or speeches which have no temporal or spiritual benefits; because, as it is stated in the following verse, one will be questioned from every one of his/her words in the Hereafter:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it).” (Qaf 50; 18) In this regard, Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) said that:

“...anybody who believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk what is good or keep quiet. (i.e. abstain from all kinds of evil and dirty talk).” (Bukhari, Adab, 31, 85)

8. One should not talk about things which are not yet clearly known whether they are lawful or unlawful, good or bad, and right or wrong. This is stated in a saying of the Prophet (pbuh):

“A slave of Allah may utter a word without thinking whether it is right or wrong, he may slip down in the Fire as far away a distance equal to that between the East and West.” (Bukhari, Riqaaq, 23) The Turkish proverb *“think a*



thousand times but speak only once” and similar ones may have been inspired by such sayings of the Prophet (pbuh).

9. It is very important to avoid meaningless talks which may damage mutual relationships for the continuity of friendships. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

وَلَا تَكَلِّمْ بِكَلَامٍ تَعْتَذِرُ مِنْهُ

“Do not say something for which you have to apologize.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 15)

10. A believer should always talk the truth and stay away from false news and speech. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said that:

“When one wakes up in the morning, all his limbs goes to his tongue and say: ‘Fear Allah in regards to protect our rights, for we will get punished because of what you talk. We depend upon you. If you are right, we will be right; and if you get distorted and go astray, we will follow you and be like you.’” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 61) The Qur’an warns us in this context as follows:

“O you who believe! Guard your duty to Allah, and speak words straight to the point; He will adjust your works for you and will forgive you your sins. Whosoever obeys Allah and His messenger, he verily has gained a signal victory.” (al-Ahzab 33; 70-71)

11. When talking about the future to say *“insha-Allah - if Allah wills”* is a very important manner of speech. A servant’s free-will is not a sufficient cause for the occurrence of a thing. What is really important is the Will of Allah. When expecting something for the future to say *insha-Allah* means to be aware of the Divine Will and not to accept any other will above His Will. It is ordered in the Qur’an: **“Nor say of anything, I shall be sure to do so and so tomorrow except if Allah will...”** (al-Kahf 18; 23-24) In a tradition of the Prophet (pbuh) it was stated that Prophet Solomon’s wish had not come true for he had not said Allah willing. (Bukhari, Ayman, 3)

H. Manners of Showing Respect and Reverence

People who live in the same community have many differences, be it their material and spiritual means or their gender. However, despite their differences they are equal as human beings. Respecting and understanding other peo-



ple's rights is a requirement of being a human. As in almost every other aspect in life, Islam has commands and advices in the matter of manners of showing respect and reverence. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ صَغِيرَنَا وَيُوقِّرْ كَبِيرَنَا

"Those who do not show mercy to their youngsters and respect their elders are not one of us." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 15)

This tradition shows that both love for youngsters and respect for elders are among the basic characteristics of believers. Love and respect are the two vital principles in perpetuity of a community. Here in this chapter we primarily mean the type of respect, which is shown towards elders by the youngsters. Therefore, we need to underline the second part of the above mentioned tradition, which is *"those who do not respect their elders, protect their honor, and observe their rights cannot be a true and perfect believer."*

Another tradition which invites believers to show respect to their elders is as follows:

"Upon the young who respect their elders for their old age Allah the Almighty will bestow servants to serve them at their old age." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 75)

It is a known fact that today's old were once young. And today's young will one day be old if Allah the Almighty bestows it upon them life. Survival of the custom of respect for generations can be achieved only if young people of every generation show respect to their elders. The last narration proves that such behavior will be rewarded by Allah the Almighty. Therefore, one should not just wait to be respected but try to earn it. The last narration also implies that those who respect their elders will live a long life.

Therefore, every Muslim must be careful about, respect, and serve those who are older than them. This strengthens the ties of respect and love amongst the social groups. Generation continue their lives in a happy and warm environment.

A believer should be respectful towards all creations. He/she should even show respect in appearance towards those who are evil and ignorant; just to teach them about being respectful. Indeed Allah the Almighty states that one of the characteristics of chosen servants of Allah is those who say "peace" to

the ignorant and continue their way. Again Allah the Almighty ordered Moses (pbuh) to talk mildly to the Pharaoh. These prove that even the hardest hearts will soften by a respectful approach and make them respectful, too.

Let's give some examples for the manners of showing respect. One should begin offering something to the eldest person in the group and continue with those on his right. Another example is that the younger members of a group should not begin talking in matters concerning elders.

Abdullah b. Umar reported (r. anhumā) Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as saying:

"I saw in a dream that I was using a miswak and the two persons contended to get it from me, the one being older than the other one. I gave the miswak to the younger one. It was said to me to give that to the older one and I gave it to the older one." (Muslim, Ru'ya, 19)

In this incident those two people were probably on the same side of the Prophet (pbuh) and he offered the *miswak* to the nearest one. However, he was warned by Gabriel and was asked to give the *miswak* to the older one of the two. Even though this incident happened in a dream, it does not make any difference; because the dreams of the prophets are valid sources of knowledge.

Sahl b. Abi Hasma narrated:

"Abdurrahman bin Sahl and Muhaiyisa b. Mas'ud went to Haibar during the days of peace. They separated from each other to take care of their works. When Muhaiyisa came back to their meeting point, he could not find his friend. He searched for him and found him in a valley lying dead. With the help of people he took out his body and buried him. Then he returned to Medina. When Abdurrahman b. Sahl, Abdullah's brother, heard what had happened, he and Muhaiyisa and Huwaiyisa b. Mas'ud went to the Prophet (pbuh). Abdurrahman intended to narrate the incident, but the Prophet said (to him), *"Let the eldest of you speak."* as Abdurrahman was the youngest (Bukhari, Jizya, 12)

When the Prophet (pbuh) drank something like milk or water, he would not finish it all but leave some of it and offer it to the person on his right. If the person on his right was younger than others, he would first ask his permission and offer the drink to the person on his left. This was his custom.



In addition to the old, people who know the Qur'an by heart and rulers are among the people who need to be respected. It is stated in a saying of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

“The Prophet (pbuh) said: showing respect to a grey-haired Muslim, to a hafiz who recites the Qur'an nicely (but not like a singer) and lives according to its principles, and to a just ruler come from showing respect to Allah the Almighty.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 20)

According to the narration of Jabir b. Abdullah (r.a.), the Prophet (pbuh) collected every two martyrs of Uhud in one piece of shroud, then he asked, *“Which of them had (knew) more of the Quran?”* When one of them was pointed out for him, he would put that one first in the grave. (Bukhari, Janaiz, 73, 76)

Thus Allah's Messenger (pbuh) showed, not just by his words but also by his actions, that those who have knowledge of the Qur'an should be respected not just in their lives but also after their death. The following Qur'anic statement also expresses that scholars in general deserve to be esteemed: **“Say (unto them, O Muhammad): Are those who know equal with those who know not?”** (al-Zumar 39; 9) Therefore, one should show respect to the scholars in accordance with their level of knowledge and keep knowledge and knowledgeable people's reputability in the Muslim society.

Muslim scholars and gnostics have manifested the best examples of this in their lives. After mentioning the names of the Sufi masters of the golden chain Muhammad Parsa (q.s.) would make the following prayer showing his respect and love for them:

أَحْيَانَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِحُبِّهِمْ وَأَمَاتَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَحَشَرَنَا مَعَهُمْ وَرَزَقَنَا مِنْ
بَرَكَاتِهِمُ الْفَوْزَ بِرِضَائِهِ وَلِقَائِهِ وَبِالْحُسْنَى

“May Allah let us live with their love and let us die with their love and resurrect us with them. And may He bless us with His Paradise and Face for the sake of their blessings.”

Knowledgeable people do not lose anything, if they do not see the respect they deserve; for knowledge is in itself a value. But societies who do not appreciate their values cannot produce new values and will pay for their ingrati-

tude dearly. In the Muslim society it is essential to esteem such values. Everyone is given the place he/she deserves. Knowledgeable and ignorant ones are never considered as equals. This is why all scholars in the Muslim society are worthy to be esteemed. On the other hand, scholars should be careful about their position in the society. When Ottoman Sheikh al-Islam attempted to kiss Sultan Abdulhamid's hand, the Sultan's following words are very significant:

“O Sheikh! Rise up your head. This turban on your head, which is the sign of your esteemed rank, should never bow down.” (Necip Fazıl, p. 16)

We should also mention that real scholars are the ones who live in accordance with their knowledge. Those who have knowledge but do not live by it are no different than the ignorant. This is why they will be treated in the society as they deserve to be treated.

In short, even though people have the same rights as being humans, but their esteem in the society may vary. It would be an imbalance to treat a scholar like an ignorant or an adult like a child or a manager like a simple citizen. It is natural to treat everybody according to their social status. Such an approach could not be considered as discrimination or favoritism. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) ordered:

أَنْزِلُوا النَّاسَ مَنَازِلَهُمْ

“*Treat the people according to their ranks.*” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 20)

However, one should avoid extreme behaviors in showing respect, which are not approved by Islam. For instance, it was narrated by Qays ibn Sa'd:

“I went to al-Hirah and saw the people prostrating themselves before a commander of theirs, so I said:

“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) has the most right to have prostration made before him. When I came to the Prophet (pbuh), I said:

“I went to al-Hirah and saw them prostrating themselves before a commander of theirs, but I told them that you had the most right to have people prostrating themselves before you.” He said:

“*Tell me, if you were to pass my grave, would you prostrate yourself before it?*”





I said:

“No.” He then said:

“Then do not do so.” (Abu Dawud, Nikah, 40)

From this statement we understand that prostration can be done only for Allah the Almighty and since prostrating before the creation is considered as extremity in showing respect, it is not permitted in Islam.

Again when the Prophet (pbuh) was asked if one might bow down before his friend, he (pbuh) replied negatively and disapproved such an action. (Tirmidhi, Isti'dhan, 31) Because bowing down before the creation, which is a manifestation of servitude, is nothing but extremism in showing respect.

Moreover, a believer should show proper respect and reverence towards his/her believing brothers and sisters, and avoid actions which may hurt their feelings. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) paid the utmost attention in this matter. Al-Ma'rur b. Suwaid narrated:

“At al-Rabadha I met Abu Dhar who was wearing a valuable cloak. And his slave, too, was wearing a similar one. I asked about the reason for it. He replied,

“I had abused a person by calling his mother with bad names during the times of the Prophet (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) said to me:

“O Abu Dhar! Did you abuse him by calling his mother with bad names? You still have some characteristics of ignorance. Your slaves are your brothers and Allah has put them under your command. So whoever has a brother under his command should feed him of what he eats and dress him of what he wears. Do not ask them (slaves) to do things beyond their capacity (power) and if you do so, then help them.” (Bukhari, Iman, 22)

Abusing a person physically and verbally just because of his/her race or color is strictly forbidden in Islam. Because color, race, gender, etc. are characteristics coming from birth cannot be causes of criticism. Criticizing them would mean criticizing the Creator. All believers are brothers, whatever their status in the Muslim society is; thus they should show each other the proper respect.

Allah's Apostle (pbuh) did not want his companions to stand up for him. Abu Umamah (r.a.) narrated: “One day the Prophet (pbuh) came to us with a



walking stick in his hand. When we saw him, we stood up. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) warned us saying:

"Do not do as Persians do towards their elders." (Ibn Majah, Dua, 2) Another tradition in this context is as follows *"Do not stand up as foreigners do for showing respect to one another."* (Abu Dawud, Adab, 152)

However there are reports stating that Allah's Messenger stood up to welcome his daughter Fatima (Abu Dawud, Adab, 143), his emancipated slave Zayd b. Haritha, and some other companions. (Tirmidhi, Isti'dhan, 32) Again the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) told the people of Ansar about Sa'd b. Mu'adh, whom he appointed as an arbiter, *"Stand up for the master (or the better one) of your community."* (Bukhari, Maghazi, 30)

Scholars have evaluated these two seemingly contradicting group of traditions and concluded that it is permissible to stand up before scholars, knowledgeable and dignified members of the society not for the purpose of bragging but to show one's love and courtesy for them. (Ibn Hajar, *Fath al-Bari*, XI, 49 ff.) The Prophet's disapproval to stand up before him is the result of his modesty. More importantly previous generations went astray and fell into the mistake of polytheism and idol worshipping as a result of their extreme respect towards their elders. And the Prophet (pbuh) wanted to protect his ummah from the same danger.

On the other hand, one should also avoid extreme expressions of respect and reverence. Because, aside from the balanced and proper praises, it is obvious that false and inappropriate praises are misleading behaviors and damages mutual trusts. A man was mentioned before the Prophet (pbuh) and another man praised him greatly. Then, the Prophet said,

"May Allah's Mercy be on you! You have cut the neck of your friend." The Prophet (pbuh) repeated this sentence many times and said,

"If it is indispensable for anyone of you to praise someone, then he should say, 'I think that he is so-and-so,' if he really thinks that he is such. Allah is the One Who will take his accounts (as He knows his reality) and no-one can sanctify anybody before Allah." (Bukhari, Adab, 54)

In another report it is ordered that, *"Do not praise each other immoderately; for this is like killing (the praised one)."* (Ibn Majah, Adab, 36)





Immoderate praises usually lead the praising person to lie and the praised one to become conceited and arrogant. It is clear that bad attributes like lie, pride, and arrogance debilitate a person materially and spiritually. This is why Allah's Messenger (pbuh) commanded his companions to throw dust upon the faces of those who praise too much and not to give credit to their praise. (Muslim, Zuhd, 68) He (pbuh) even warned his companions not to praise him immoderately. Anas b. Malik (r.a.) narrated:

“A man came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and praised him saying: “O our master! O the son of our master! O the best one of our community! O the son of the best one of our community!” Upon this the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“O People! Fear Allah! Do not let Satan to deceive you! I am Muhammad son of Abdullah. I am the Messenger of Allah. By Allah, I do not want you to put me above the rank that is given me by Allah the Exalted.” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 153)

Another warning of the Prophet (pbuh) in this context is as follows:

“Do not exaggerate in praising me as the Christians praised the son of Mary, for I am only a Slave. So, call me the Slave of Allah and His Apostle.” (Bukhari, Anbiya, 48)

As it is seen, Allah's Apostle (pbuh) asked his followers to mention only the real characteristics of a person and prohibited to say exaggerated praises. Because once Christians exaggerated their praises for Jesus (pbuh), attributed him divinity, and went astray by accepting him as the son of Allah. (al-Nisa 4; 171, al-Maidah 5; 72-77)

Therefore, showing respect and reverence can be achieved by being moderate and avoiding extreme behaviors. This is the way that the Prophet (pbuh) established and taught the believers.

I. Manners of Laughing

“Do not laugh too much! Because laughing too much kills the heart.”

Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 2

Laughing is usually a way of reflecting inner happiness, tranquility, and esthetic feelings. Laughing when it is appropriate is a natural and positive at-



tribute. What is not natural is not to laugh when it is necessary or to exaggerate laughing and not to be able to control it. In other words, laughing when it is necessary and as much as it is needed is very important for proper manners. It is necessary for us to look into the practice of our excellent Exemplar, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), in order to learn the balance in this matter. It is narrated by Aisha (r.anha):

“I never saw Allah’s Apostle laughing loudly enough to enable me to see his uvula, but he used to smile only.” (Bukhari, Tafsir, 46/2)

Jarir b. Abdullah (r.a.) narrated: “The Prophet did not screen himself from me (had never prevented me from entering upon him) since I embraced Islam, and whenever he saw me, he would receive me with a smile.” (Bukhari, Adab, 68)

Another report narrated by Abdullah b. Harith (r.a.) is as follows: “I have never seen a person smile more than the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).” (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 10)

As it is deduced from these narrations, the Prophet (pbuh) often had a smiling face. In other words, he would not usually show his grief even during his most troubled times and so did not sadden those around him. When he met with someone he loved, his smiling and happiness would double.

On the other hand, there are some reports that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) sometimes smiled so much that his uvula could be seen.

For instance according to a narration by Aisha, mother of the believers, the people complained to the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) of the lack of rain, so he gave an order for a pulpit. It was then set up for him in the place of prayer. He then gave a short sermon and prayed to Allah for rain. Allah then produced a cloud, and the storm of thunder and lightning came on. Then the rain fell by Allah’s permission, and before he reached his mosque streams were flowing. When he saw the speed with which the people were seeking shelter, he (pbuh) smiled till his back teeth were visible. (Abu Dawud, Istisqa, 2)

Abu Dharr (r.a.) reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“I know the last of the inhabitants of Paradise to enter it and the last of the inhabitants of Hell to come out of it. He is a man who would be brought on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said: Present his minor sins to him,





and withhold from him his serious Sins. Then the minor sins would be placed before him, and it would be said:

“On such and such a day you did so and so and on such and such a day you did so and so.” He would say:

“Yes. It will not be possible for him to deny, while he would be afraid lest serious sins should be presented before him. It would be said to him:

“In place of every evil deed you will have good deed. He will say: My Lord! I have done things I do not see here.

I, indeed, saw the Messenger of Allah laughed till his front teeth were exposed.” (Muslim, Iman, 314)

We see that Allah’s Apostle laughed in another incident narrated by Abdullah b. Mas’ud (r.a.): Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said:

“I recognize the last of the inhabitants of Fire to be taken out thereof. A man will come out of it crawling. It will be said to him:

“Go and enter Paradise. He would go there to enter Paradise, but would find persons who have already occupied all its apartments. It would be said to him:

“Do you recall the time when you were in the Hell? He would say:

“Yes. It would be said to him: Express any desire. And he would express the desire. It would be said to him:

“For you are that which you desired and ten times of the world. Then the man would say:

“Dear Lord! Are You making a fun of me, though You are the King?”

I saw the Messenger of Allah laughed till his front teeth were visible.” (Muslim, Iman, 308; Tirmidhi, Jahannam, 10)

What we understand from the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) is that we need to have a smiling face. It is also obvious that laughing is natural before a pleasing behavior or a joyful incident; however to exaggerate laughing and to make and attend programs such as stand up comedy shows to laugh for hours are not appropriate behaviors. Because laughing too much is not a sign of hu-



morousness, being funny, or having a smiling face but being unaware of Allah the Almighty. Indeed the Prophet (pbuh) said in this respect:

وَلَا تُكْثِرِ الضَّحْكَ فَإِنَّ كَثْرَةَ الضَّحْكِ تُمِيتُ الْقَلْبَ

“Do not laugh too much! Because laughing too much kills the heart.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 2) Thus, he attracted our attention to this reality. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) even recommended us to prefer crying over laughing by saying that *“If you but knew what I know then you would have laughed little and wept much.”* (Bukhari, Tafsir, 5/12) Exaggerated laughing is the result of unawareness of the Greatness of Allah. This is why Allah the Almighty says in the Qur’an:

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

“Then let them laugh a little: they will weep much, as the reward of what they used to earn.” (al-Tawba 9; 82)

K. Manners of Making Jokes

When we look into its results such as relaxing, comforting, strengthening love and friendship, joking is essentially a permitted deed. Our beloved Prophet (pbuh), sultan of our hearts, occasionally made jokes and approved and welcomed the jokes of some companions. However, he (pbuh) prohibited hurting, mocking, belittling, obscene, and exaggerated jokes and jokes based on lies. The Prophet’s (pbuh) own jokes clearly show us that our jokes should be wise and elegant.

There was always a part of truth in the Prophet’s jokes. He never resorted to lies in his life even for making simple jokes and he did not approve to see such behavior from his followers, either. According to Abu Huraira’s (r.a.) report, companions of the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“O Messenger of Allah! You forbid us from making jokes but you yourself make jokes.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) told them:

“Yes, but I do not say anything but the truth.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 57) In another saying, the Prophet (pbuh) made the following warnings related to this matter:





“Woe to him who tells things, speaking falsely, to make people laugh thereby. Woe to him! Woe to him!” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 80)

Some of the examples of Prophet’s elegant and truth based jokes are as follows:

A gullible man came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and asked for a camel from him as a ride. The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“Okay, what do you say if I give you a female baby camel?” The man replied amazedly:

“O Messenger of Allah! What am I going to do with a baby camel? How can it carry me?” Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) replied:

“Are not all camels the babies of a mother camel?” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 57)

In another incident, an old lady from the Ansar (residents of Medina) came to the Prophet and told him:

“Please make a dua (supplication) for me that I go to heaven.” The Prophet replied: *“Did you not hear it? Old women cannot go to heaven.”* The old lady became very sad when she heard this. Then the Prophet said smiling: *“Did not you read the verse: **“We have created their companions of special creation and made them virgin-pure and beloved, equal in age”*** (Al-Waqia, 56; 35-37). Then in a pleasant manner he explained to the old lady that old women would go to heaven as young girls and thus he cheered her.” (Haythami, X, 419; Tirmidhi, *Shamail*, p. 91-2)

A poet named Abbas b. Mirdas found his share from war booty insufficient and wrote a poem complaining about the situation to the Prophet (pbuh). When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) heard about this, he told Bilal Habashi: *“When I tell you to cut Abbas’s tongue, take him and give him a garment.”* Then he called Abbas and told him:

“I will have your tongue cut.” and turned to Bilal and said:

“O Bilal! Take him and cut his tongue.” When Bilal held Abbas’s hand and was taking him away, Abbas began to scream:

“O Messenger of Allah! Is he going to cut my tongue? O people of Muhajirun! Is he going to cut my tongue? O people of Ansar! Is he going to cut my tongue?” Upon this Bilal told him:



“Be quiet! Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) asked me to give you a garment and so shut your mouth” and gave him an extra garment.” (Ibn Sa’d, IV, 273)

Anas b. Malik (r.a.) narrated: “There was man named Zahir from the people of the desert. Whenever Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) came to the desert, Zahir would give him the products of the desert (pbuh) as gifts. In return Prophet (pbuh) would fill Zahir’s bag with items that he needed and told him:

“Zahir is our desert and we are his city.”

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) loved Zahir very much. He was not a good-looking person. One day when Zahir was trying to sell his goods, the Prophet (pbuh) closed his eyes with his hands from behind. Zahir tried to escape and said:

“Who are you? Leave me alone” Then he realized that it was the Prophet (pbuh) and he was relieved. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) began to announce:

“O people! This slave is for sale.” Zahir became very sad and told the Prophet (pbuh):

“O Messenger of Allah! Who would like to buy a worthless slave like me?” Allah’s Messenger cheered him up saying:

“No, O Zahir! You are a very valuable person in the presence of Allah the Almighty.” (Ibn Hanbal, III, 161)

Here in that tradition Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) implied to say that all human beings are the slaves of Allah the Almighty.

Mahmud b. Rabi (r.a.) said that, “I remember that when I was about five years old, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would take some water to his mouth from a bucket in front of our house and threw it to my face.” (Bukhari, Ilm, 18) Here we see that the Prophet (pbuh) made jokes proper to the ages of the children and joined in their plays, and thus is a model for believers with his actions. His actions were the reflection of his love and relation with the children. On the other hand, spraying water to a child’s face was kind of a spiritual blessing from the Prophet (pbuh) for the child.

It is reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) sometimes had fun with Anas b. Malik saying, *“O you with the two ears.”* (Abu Dawud, Adab, 84)





Allah's Messenger (pbuh) not only made jokes himself but also tolerated some of the jokes of his companions. One day a humoristic companion named Nuaim al Ansari (r.a.) bought some fresh fruit and vegetables in Medina and took them to the Prophet (pbuh). Then he told the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):

"O Messenger of Allah! I bought these for you and they are gifts for you." A while later when the seller came and asked for his money, Nuaim took him to the Prophet (pbuh) and said:

"O Messenger of Allah! Could you pay this man's money?" Allah's Messenger (pbuh) asked him:

"Weren't these gifts for us?" Nuaim (r.a.) replied:

"O Messenger of Allah! When I bought these, I did not have money. But I wanted you to taste them. This is why I bought them." Upon this he (Allah's Apostle) smiled and paid the seller's money." (Ibn Hajar, *al-Isabah*, III, 570)

Another humoristic and repartee companion named Suhaib b. Rumi, who was also among the most suffered believers, narrated one of his memories as follows:

"One day when I visited the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he had dates and bread on his table." He invited me saying:

"Here have some!" My eyes were aching at the time. I immediately sat and began to eat. Allah's Apostle (pbuh) told me smiling:

"Your eyes are hurting but you can still eat." I replied:

"O Messenger of Allah! I am eating with the non-aching part." Upon my answer I saw the Messenger of Allah laughed till his front teeth were visible." (Ibn Majah, *Tibb*, 3)

Once Aisha (r.anha) cooked a soup called *harira* and invited Sawda (r. anha). When Sawda refused her invitation, Aisha (r. anha) told her, "Either you will eat this or I will rub it in your face." When Sawda did not have the soup, Aisha (r. anha) tried to rub it in her face. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) intervened. He smiled and helped Sawda (r. anha) to do the same to Aisha (r.anha)." (Haythami, IV, 315-316)

These are some examples for the wise and graceful jokes from the life of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). Especially joking with children, spouses,



needy, poor, and lonely members of the society are presented to the believers as prophetic measures of joking. It is essential to avoid false and hurting jokes. It should not be forgotten that making jokes without paying attention to the time and place is considered as an extreme behavior. And extremism is against the prophetic custom which orders moderation in every aspect of life.

L. Manners of Yawning and Sneezing

Yawning is an involuntary action that causes us to open our mouths wide and breathe deeply in and out because of tiredness, sleepiness, or boredom.^{*87} It is at the same time a sign of heedlessness and absent mindedness.

A sneeze, on the other hand, is a convulsive expulsion of air from the lungs through the nose and mouth, usually caused by foreign particles irritating the nasal mucosa.^{**88} Sneezing happens because of a compelling force which comes from the body and the person who feels the urge to sneeze feels relieved after sneezing. This is why, on the contrary to yawning, sneezing is a cause for liveliness of the body. In this context, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) states that sneezing is something liked by Allah the Almighty and yawning comes from Satan:

"...But as regards yawning, it is from Satan, so one must try one's best to stop it, if one says 'Ha' when yawning, Satan will laugh at him." (Bukhari, Adab, 125) In another narration it is stated that, *"When one of you yawns, he should keep his mouth shut with the help of his hand, for it is the devil that enters therein."* (Muslim, Zuhd, 57-58)

Yawning, which is expressed in these tradition as an action which comes from Satan, is usually caused by excessive eating, inactivity, and sleepiness. All of these are the states liked by Satan. This is why yawning is not an appropriate action. It should be prevented as much as it is possible; if it cannot be stopped, then one should close his mouth with his hand.

There are several ways to prevent yawning. To prevent yawning especially during prayer, one should pay attention to the following points:

- Pay attention to the manners of going to the privy

87. * <http://health.howstuffworks.com/mental-health/human-nature/behavior/question572.htm>

88. ** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sneeze>





- Refreshing or performing a new ablution for every prayer
- To leave everything other than Allah behind especially after saying the *takbir* of a prayer
- To recite “*auzu basmala*” consciously

The Prophet’s advices about the manners of sneezing are as follows:

“If anyone of you sneezes, he should say ‘Al-Hamdulillah’ (Praise be to Allah), and his (Muslim) brother or companion should say to him, ‘Yarhamuka-l-lah’ (May Allah bestow his Mercy on you). When the latter says ‘Yarhamuka-l-lah,’ the former should say, ‘Yahdikumul-lah wa Yuslih balakum’ (May Allah give you guidance and improve your condition).” (Bukhari, Adab, 126)

Sneezing is related to the brain, nose, and throat. Sneezing affects all the limbs of the body which are shaken by it. As a result it is considered as a cause for liveliness and healthiness of the body. Health is considered a great blessing. This is why those who sneeze should praise Allah.⁸⁹ It is suggested to say ‘*Yarhamuka-l-lah*’ to one who praises Allah, but there is nothing that needs to be done for the one who does not praise. In this context, Anas (r.a.) narrated:

“Two men sneezed before the Prophet and he said ‘*Yarhamuka-l-lah*’ to one of them, while he did not say ‘*Yarhamuka-l-lah*’ to the other. So that man said, “O Allah’s Apostle! You said ‘*Yarhamuka-l-lah*’ to that fellow but you did not say ‘*Yarhamuka-l-lah*’ to me. “The Prophet said,

“That man praised Allah, but you did not praise Allah.” (Bukhari, Adab, 127)

The Prophet’s response to the praised person was because that person was aware of the significance of praising Allah for His blessings. As for the second person, he did not have such a mental state; thus he was deprived of the prophetic prayer.

If a person sneezes frequently because of a cold, it is not necessary to pray for him every time he sneezes. This is explained by a tradition of the Prophet (pbuh): “*Respond three times to your brother when he sneezes, and if he sneezes more often, he has a cold in his head.* (Abu Dawud, Adab, 92)

89. When a person sneezes the heart, which ensures the vitality of the body, stops for an instant and then starts again. In a way in sneezing there is matter of a person’s death and resurrection. Praising Allah with this consciousness becomes more meaningful.



There are also other expressions used today to respond to people who sneeze, such as “bless you”, “gesundheit”, or “long live”. These are good wishes for the addressee, but their meanings cannot match the prayers advised by the traditions of the Prophet (pbuh).

In addition to all these, it is an appropriate behavior to close one’s mouth with his/her hand or with a handkerchief. It is narrated that when the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) sneezed, he placed his hand or a garment on his mouth, and lessened the noise. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 98)

M. Manners of Making a Journey

“O Allah, bless my people’s work which they started early in the mornings.”

Abu Dawud, Jihad, 78

Travels are amongst the unavoidable facts of human life. They can be for military, commercial, or scholarly purposes. Also, they can be just for sight-seeing or visiting a relative. There can also be other goals for traveling. In so far as that travels should be done for a licit reason and they cannot be against the orders of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh).

The pleasure of Allah and the goals taught by Allah and His Messenger must form the real object of a travel. In the following verses, Allah the Almighty advises His servants to set off on a journey to see and take lessons from the states of earlier people:

“Say: travel through the earth and see what the end of those who rejected truth was.” (al-An’am 6; 11)

“Say: Travel through the earth and see how Allah did originate creation; so will Allah produce a later creation: For Allah has power over all things.” (al-Ankabut 29; 20)

The Qur’an encourages setting off for a journey with sincere intentions and good goals. Those who make a journey for such purposes are mentioned and praised in the Qur’an with those who turn repentant (to Allah), those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who bow down, those who prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and those who observe the limits (ordained) of Allah. (al-Tawba 9; 112) Beginning with the time of Umar’s caliphate, Muslims seriously started to develop roads



and rest areas by the roads possibly as result of the above mentioned verse which encourages travel. For instance, one who began his journey from Cairo could peacefully and safely go to Baghdad without feeling any need to take provisions with him.

Journeys have been a complementary method of special training (*Seyr-usuluk*) in Sufism. By means of this method, when a person leaves the place where he was born he recognizes that he is actually temporarily in this world. Not to be known by anybody and feeling the strangeness and the unknown which surrounds him helps him to spiritually improve himself. Because travelling cleanses the disciple from worldly ties and spiritual impurities like flowing water cleanses its dirt and impurities.

Islam encourages travelling in order to take lessons and to achieve spiritual goals. Thus adjustments are made in some acts of worship during journeys because of the hardships. For instance, reducing the number of cycles of prayer, the option to postpone fasting during the month of Ramadan, and being able to accept alms are some of these dispensations.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) made several journeys for various reasons, such as migration, military expedition, etc. He paid attention to some manners during his journeys, which have become principles for his ummah to follow.

The Prophet (pbuh) usually set off on his journeys on Thursdays. He would rarely begin a journey on another day. (Bukhari, Jihad, 103; Abu Dawud, Jihad, 77)

Of course there are some reasons for the Prophet's choice to travel on Thursdays. On that day a servant's deeds are submitted to Allah the Almighty. (Tirmidhi, Sawm, 43) It is the day on which the gates of Paradise are opened. (Muslim, Birr, 35) Allah's Messenger (pbuh) wanted his journeys to be presented to Allah the Almighty amongst his other righteous deeds. Therefore, believers should manifest the same sensibility.

It is recommended to set off for a journey early in the morning to benefit from the coolness and freshness of the morning. Indeed, Allah's Apostle (pbuh) prayed for his follower saying, "*O Allah, bless my people's work which they started early in the mornings.*" (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 78) He would send his military expeditions early in the mornings as well.

Beginning early in the morning is an important principle and a means of blessings not only for a journey but also for all kinds of activities, such as acquiring knowledge or doing business. Believers should benefit from this source of blessings. Sahr b. Vadaa al-Ghamidi, a merchant companion, reported that his goods had increased and he had become rich because he began his journeys early in the morning. (Tirmidhi, Buyu', 6)

When Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was beginning a journey, he would sit on his ride, say *takbir* for three times and recite the verse:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ. وَإِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ

“Glorified be He Who hath subdued these unto us, and we were not capable (of subduing them); And lo! Unto our Lord we are returning.” (al-Zuhurf 43; 13-14) and then he would make the following supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ فِي سَفَرِنَا هَذَا الْبِرَّ وَالتَّقْوَى وَمِنَ الْعَمَلِ مَا تَرْضَى.
اللَّهُمَّ هَوِّنْ عَلَيْنَا سَفَرَنَا هَذَا وَاطْوِ عَنَّا بُعْدَهُ. اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ
فِي السَّفَرِ وَالْخَلِيفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَعَثَاءِ السَّفَرِ
وَكَاثِبَةِ الْمَنْظَرِ وَسُوءِ الْمُنْقَلَبِ فِي الْمَالِ وَالْأَهْلِ

“O Allah, we ask from You in this journey of ours uprightness, piety and such deeds as are pleasing to You. O Allah, make easy for us this journey of ours and make the distant near for us. O Allah, You are our Companion in the journey, and the One Who looks after our family and property in our absence.”

When he returned, he said these words adding:

أَيُّونَ تَائِبُونَ عَابِدُونَ لِرَبِّنَا حَامِدُونَ

“Returning, repentant, serving and praising our Lord.” (Muslim, Hajj, 425; Abu Dawud, Jihad, 72)

In this supplication, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stated the common concern which could be felt by anybody and showed personally how we can pray



under such circumstances. When setting off for a journey Allah's Messenger (pbuh) sometimes recited the following verse:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ مَجْرِيهَا وَمُزْسِيهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“So he said: embark you on the Ark, in the name of Allah, whether it move or be at rest for my Lord is, be sure, Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

(Hud 11; 41)

When the Prophet (pbuh) and his armies went up to the hills during their journey, they would say: “Allah is Most Great”; and when they descended, they would say: “Glory be to Allah.” (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 72) and then he would say,

“None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, Alone Who has no partner. All the Kingdom belongs to Him and all the praises are for Him and He is Omnipotent. We are returning with repentance, worshipping, prostrating ourselves and praising our Lord. Allah fulfilled His Promise, granted victory to His slave and He Alone defeated all the clans.” (Bukhari, Jihad, 158; Muslim, Hajj, 428)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would observe moderation in his journeys and suggest his companions to do the same. He would remind them of the Greatness of Allah and to be reverent towards Him. The following incident narrated by Abu Musa Al-Ashari (r.a.) is an exemplary one:

“We were in the company of Allah's Apostle (pbuh) during a journey. Whenever we went up a high place we used to say: “None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and Allah is the Greatest,” and our voices used to rise, so the Prophet said, “O people! Be merciful to yourselves (i.e. don't raise your voice), for you are not calling a deaf or an absent one, but One Who is with you, no doubt He is All-Hearer, ever Near (to all things).” (Bukhari, Jihad, 131; Muslim, Dhikr, 44)

When the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) was travelling and night came on, he would say: *“O earth, my Lord and your Lord is Allah; I seek refuge in Allah from your evil, the evil of what you contain, the evil of what has been created in you, and the evil of what creeps upon you; I seek refuge in Allah from lions, from large black snakes, from other snakes, from scorpions, from the evil of*

jinn which inhabit a settlement, and from a parent and his offspring.” (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 131) He would also suggest taking refuge in Allah for protection from evil saying:

“When anyone lands at a place, and then says:

أَعُوذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ التَّامَّاتِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

“I seek refuge in the Perfect Word of Allah from the evil of what He has created;” nothing would harm him until he marches from that stopping place.” (Muslim, Dhikr, 54-55)

One should try not to go on a journey alone. He/she should try to find a nice companion to go on journey with. Going on a journey alone carries many dangers.

During a journey one may face unexpected hardships in addition to the natural ones. One may need help for various reasons. Some may face problems with their children’s health; some may lose their provisions; some may have problems with their rides; and so forth. Because

السَّفَرُ قِطْعَةٌ مِنَ السَّعْرِ “Travel is part from *Saqar* (Hell)” (Interestingly there is only one dot difference between the spellings of “travel” and “Hell” in Arabic)

Indeed Ali (r.a.) wanted to express the magnitude of hardship by saying:

“If the Prophet (pbuh) had not said “*al-safar qit’atun min al-adhab* – travel is part from torture,” (Bukhari, Umra, 19) I would have said “*al-saqar qit’atun min al-safar* – torture of Hell is a part from travel.”

Therefore, a Muslim should always help the people that he/she is with on a journey. This is also among the manners of making a journey in Islam. Abu Sa’id al-Khudri (r.a.) narrated:

“When I was with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), a man on his camel came. (Asking for help) he began to look around. Upon this Allahs Messenger (pbuh) said:

“Those who have an extra ride should give one to those who do not have any; those who have extra provisions should give some to those who do not





have any.” and he counted so many sorts of goods that we thought that none of us had the right to keep anything extra with us.” (Muslim, Luqata, 18)

According to the narration of Jabir (r.a.), once the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) intended to go on an expedition. He (pbuh) said:

“O group of the emigrants (Muhajirun) and the helpers (Ansar), among your brethren there are people who have neither property nor family. So one of you should take with him two or three persons; with me. I also rode on my camel by turns like one of them.” Indeed we had one camel which we rode in turns. I took two (or three) people with me to take turns on my ride and I had the right to ride it only as much as one of them.” (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 34)

Again Jabir ibn Abdullah (r.a.) stated that when he was on a journey the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) used to come from the back in order to be able to help the weak. He would take someone up behind him and make supplication for them all. (Abu Dawud, Jihad, 94) In a group everyone should act according to the strength of the weakest one of the group; for the strength of a group is measured in accordance with the strength of the weakest link.

The Arabic word *safar* for travel also means to open and to reveal something. If we think about it from this point, we can say that journeys are important moments where one’s inner world and character reveals itself. Indeed the following incident clearly states this fact:

“Someone praised another person in front of Umar (r.a.). Umar (r.a.) asked him:

“Have you had any transaction with that person?” He said: “No” Umar (r.a.) asked:

“Have you ever been his neighbor?” Again the man replied negatively. Umar (r.a.) asked again:

“Have you ever been on a journey with him?” When the man responded negatively, Umar (r.a.) said:

“Then you are talking about a person whom you know nothing about.”

This can be clearly seen especially during the tiring and arduous journey of major pilgrimage (hajj). In the journey of hajj, people usually fight and hurt each other’s feelings over the littlest things. This is the result of the weaknesses of human being which brings forth their inner negativities. Whereas, in such



a sacred journey people are supposed to be polite, patient, and forbearing; they are supposed to stay away from nasty talks, arguing, and all kinds of sins.

After achieving the object of the journey one should not linger around and should go back immediately. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stated that making a journey consisted of all kinds of hardships' it disturbs a person's eating and sleeping habits. Then he (pbuh) said that,

"When one of you has accomplished his purpose, he should hasten his return to his family." (Bukhari, Umrah, 19; Muslim, Imarah, 179)

This is because a person has rights upon himself, his children, and his family. When a believer is organizing his/her life, he/she should be able to keep the balance amongst his/her responsibilities. This can only be achieved by giving everybody their rights.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prohibited believers, who were away from their family for a long time, to return to their family at night unexpectedly. (Bukhari, Nikah, 130; Muslim, Imara, 183)

It has been narrated on the authority of Anas b. Malik (r.a.) that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would not go back to his family by night. He would go to them in the morning or in the evening. (Muslim, Imarah, 180)

Of course this consists of various wisdom, individual and familial benefits. This has been true especially when people have limited or no means of communication. In this way family members will be able to find the opportunity to prepare themselves spiritually and materially; complete their deficiencies, and tidy up the house. If the family is informed, then it will not be a surprise and a problem. If there is no chance to inform the family, one should make his plans to return his home in the morning.

According to Qa'b b. Malik's (r.a.) report, whenever Allah's Messenger (pbuh) returned from a journey, he would first visit the Mosque and offer a two-rak'at prayer therein. (Bukhari, Maghazi, 79)

Such behavior has many benefits. First of all, this is a statement of gratitude and thankfulness to Allah for His bestowal of a healthy return to one's family and home. Second, ablution and prayer cleanses a person from spiritual and material impurities and gives physical and spiritual vigor. Making a travel, even if it is for a very short distance, tires a person. Performing an ablution and





two rak'ah prayer refreshes the body and soul; thus it enables a person to go to his/her family vigorously, happily, and peacefully. It is also a nice thing to find some time to get ready spiritually if, by chance, there is catastrophic news, which could devastate a person.

N. Manners of Lying Down and Sleeping

Lord Almighty created the day to work and earn livelihood and the night to sleep and rest. It is stated in some verses:

“And He it is Who makes the Night as a Robe for you, and Sleep as Repose, and makes the Day (as it were) a Resurrection.” (al-Furqan 25; 47)

“And we made your sleep for rest, and the night as a covering ...”
(al-Naba' 78; 9-10)

In these verses, the darkness of the night is likened to a robe for its covering and concealing character. Sleeping is presented as a means of resting, for those who sleep stop working and rest by staying inactive.

In fact the night is a social, ethical, esthetic, and sanitary robe or covering. It is such a garment of might, peace, and blessing that is cut in accordance with the size of the world. From the point of marriage law, it is a garment of happiness, a curtain of secrecy protecting privacy, and a refuge for those who would like to hide materially and spiritually. From this perspective the night is both a means of union for the lovers of Truth and a big deception for the sinners and those who are defeated by their inner selves.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that, *“sleep is the sister of death.”* (Suyuti, II, 162) The verse: **“It is He Who does take your souls by night, and hath knowledge of all that you have done by day ...”** (al-An'am 6; 60) also expresses the same point. This means that one should think about his/her sleep and comprehend the reality of death.

This is why, when a Muslim goes to bed and leaves himself/herself to the arms of sleep he/she should remember that he/she might be going and never coming back. Moreover, he should be ready for it. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) taught us the best principles of going to bed and sleeping and showed these manners in his actions. When he wanted to sleep, he would lay on his right side, place his right hand under his right cheek, and then make the following supplication:



اَللّٰهُمَّ اَسَلَمْتُ نَفْسِيْ اِلَيْكَ وَفَوَّضْتُ اَمْرِيْ اِلَيْكَ وَوَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيْ
اِلَيْكَ وَالْجَاثُ ظَهَرِيْ اِلَيْكَ رَغْبَةً وَرَهْبَةً اِلَيْكَ لَا مَلْجَا وَلَا مَنْجَا
مِنْكَ اِلَّا اِلَيْكَ. اَمَنْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ الَّذِيْ اَنْزَلْتَ وَنَبِيِّكَ الَّذِيْ اَرْسَلْتَ

“O Allah! I have submitted myself to You, entrusted my work to You, turned my face to You, entrusted myself to You, took refuge in You, hoping Your consent and fearing Your torment. There is no refuge from You except You. I have believed in the book You revealed and in the Prophet You sent.” He (pbuh) also told one of his companions that:

“If you die after reciting this supplication, then you will die on the religion of Islam (i.e., as a Muslim); so let these words be the last you say before going to bed” (Bukhari, Daawat, 7)

The bed of the Prophet (pbuh) was set as a grave; his head faced toward the Mosque. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 97) The sheet that was spread under him was also like a shroud of a dead. Es'ad Erbili (q.s.) describes the Prophet's state in one of his Persian poems as follows:

“Since the earth is the place of manifestation for the lights of knowledge, my body does not wish to lie on beds.” (*Divan*, p. 14)

A Muslim should live his life being conscious that even his/her sleep is an act of worship. A servant knows that every moment of his/her life is under the control of Allah's surveillance. He/she is aware that Allah sees everything he/she does; He hears everything the believer speaks and He even knows the things that the believer s thinks. This is why he/she tries not to be heedless of Allah not even for a moment. Allah the Almighty bestows many spiritual blessings upon His believing servants. True dreams are one of these blessings.⁹⁰

90. During sleep a person's connection with the material world goes down to a minimum level. Spiritual feelings that are locked in the cage of the body gain strength. Watching the invisible world in their dreams would be bestowed upon the righteous believers. Dreams are three types:

1. Satanic dreams: These are the dreams which are inspired by Satan to scare, to bother, to sadden or to squeeze one's soul. An example is a dream where one falls from a high place or scenes of big catastrophes. If someone sees such a dream, he/she should not let anybody know about his/her dream and take refuge in Allah from Satan's temptations.

2. Dreams seen under the influence of external factor: Seeing scenes in dreams, which are the reflection of a person's daily state and imagination. For instance, someone who



بِاسْمِكَ أَمُوتُ وَأَحْيَا اللَّهُمَّ

“(With Your name, O Allah, I die and I live).”

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

“All the Praises are for Allah Who has made us alive after He made us die (sleep) and unto Him is the Resurrection).” (Bukhari, Daawat, 8)

Lying down according to the recommendations of the Prophet (pbuh) turns someone’s sleep into an act of worship and puts him under the protection of Allah. Nothing or nobody may harm a person who believes in the protection of Allah. If we think the meaning of the above mentioned supplication, we would be seized by a feeling like we are presenting our situation to Allah the Almighty for the last time. Because any supplication might be our last supplication or a prayer might be our last prayer, or a day of fasting might be our last day of fasting. In short, any one of our actions might be our last action.

One of the customs of the Prophet (pbuh) is to begin every action from the right. Therefore, he (pbuh) preferred to lie down on his right. Such a position is also beneficial for a person’s health. As it is known, the human heart and stomach are on the left side of the body. Both limbs are very important for the body and put putting pressure them especially by sleeping on them is very dangerous for the human health. This is why doctors advise not to lie down on the heart and stomach.

When the Prophet (pbuh) needed to sleep somewhere outside of his home he would lay and sleep in a different style than the usual. He would lie on his right side, set his right elbow up, and supported his right cheek with his right hand. (Muslim, Masajid, 313) This lying position is usually preferred in the open spaces where there is nothing to be used as pillow. Again Allah’s Messenger

ate something salty may see drinking water. These cannot be interpreted, either.

3. True dreams: Such dream can be completely remembered. These are the dreams inspired by Allah as good news or a warning. True dreams need to be interpreted and their codes should be deciphered by experts. Interpreting dreams is a science based on certain principles. This is why interpreters of dreams should have spiritual capability. Otherwise they face the dangers of wrong interpretation. For the Messenger of Allah said that: “... *Dreams come true on the basis of their first interpretation.*” (Ibn Majah, Ta’bir, 7) (See Osman Nûri Topbaş, *Tasavvuf*, p. 389-95)

(pbuh) chose this position of lying when he wanted to take a short nap or when he was late for going to bed and concerned about waking up for the *fajr* (early morning) prayer. (Bukhari, Daawat, 5; Muslim, Musafirun, 121-122)

Allah's Messenger would make different supplications when he went to bed and woke up from sleep. When he was going to bed, he would say:

بِسْمِكَ أَمُوتُ وَأَحْيَا اللَّهُمَّ

"O Allah! I would die and resurrect with Your name." When he woke up from sleep, he would say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

"Praise be to Allah Who resurrects us after taking our lives. Return is only to Him." (Bukhari, Daawat, 8)⁹¹

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would say that those who forgot to mention Allah's name while going to bed had left their task incomplete. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 25) When he went to bed, he would recite the chapters of Ihlās, Falaq, and Nas from the Qur'an and blow in his hands and then rub them on his body. (Bukhari, Fadail al-Qur'an, 14)

Fatima (r. anha) complained about the blisters on her hand from using a mill-stone. She went to ask the Prophet for a servant, the Prophet (pbuh) told her, *"Shall I not tell you of a thing which is better for you than a servant? When you (both) go to your beds, say 'Allahu Akbar' thirty-four times, and 'Subhan Allah' thirty-three times, and 'Alhamdu lillah' thirty-three times, for that is better for you than a servant."* (Bukhari, Daawat, 11) By recommending Fatima (r.anha) to mention some remembrances of Allah the Prophet (pbuh) showed us how to relieve the tiredness one may feel in a day.

Before going to bed, one should check to see if there is anything harmful in it. The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"When anyone of you go to bed, he should shake out his bed by using a part of his garment, for he does not know what has come on to it after him,

91. Inspired from these supplications a friend of Allah was saying in his supplications: *"O Allah! Take my life with You and Resurrect me with You."*





and then he should say: *‘Bismika Rabbi wada’tu Janbi wa bika arfa’uhu, In amsakta nafsi farhamha wa in arsaltaha fahfazha bima tahfazu bihi ibadak-as-salihin’*. Dear Lord! I go to my bed with Your name and with Your name I get up from my bed. If You take my soul in my sleep, Have mercy on me and forgive me. If You let me live, protect me from evil like You protect Your righteous servants.” (Bukhari, Daawat, 13)

Even though those who live in modern-day regular houses and flats may have difficulty in understanding the wisdom of this tradition, those who live in desert or village houses know the significance of these recommendations. However, these recommendations are beneficial for those who live in city houses, too; because there is still a possibility to find something harmful in our beds, like needles.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) also prohibited to spend the nights in buildings that have no safety fences, like some stables. (Tirmidhi, Adab, 82)

Furthermore, the Prophet (pbuh) has also provided his ummah with examples on matters of the positions of which one should lie. However, there are also some lying positions that are disapproved by the Prophet (pbuh). One of them is lying on the face down position. Tahfa b. Qais (r.a.) narrated:

“I was lying in the mosque on my face down. Someone began to poke me with his foot and said:

“This is a lying style which causes Allah’s anger.” When I looked at the man, I saw that he was the Messenger of Allah (pbuh).” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 94)

This lying position not only causes the displeasure of Allah and His Messenger but also contains some health risks. It causes pressure on the heart and stomach. It also looks ugly and disrespectful. Therefore, it would be the most appropriate approach for us to stay away from such disapproved position of lying.

Abdullah b. Yazid (r.a.) said that: “I saw Allah’s Apostle lying flat on his back in the mosque with one leg on the other.” (Bukhari, Salat, 85) In another report, Jabir b. Abdullah reported Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) as saying: *None of you should lie on his back and place one of his feet upon the other.* (Muslim, Libas, 73) There is no contradiction between these two reports. The latter one prohibits placing one leg on the other leg in a way which reveals one’s private parts of the body. The former one, on the other hand, shows the Prophet’s



(pbuh) custom and the permissible position, which does not reveal the private parts of the body.

When the Prophet (pbuh) woke up at night, he would relieve himself, if he needed, wash his hands and face, then go back to bed. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 105)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) regulated his day and night life moderately. He would not generally go to bed before *i'sha* (night) prayer and he would not usually stay up and chat after it. (Bukhari, Mawaqit, 23) Ibn Mas'ud (r.a.) said that: "Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prohibited us to chat at night after *i'sha* prayer." (Ibn Majah, Salat, 12) This prohibition has the characteristics of an advice to use the night wisely which is very important and ensures one to wake up for *tahajjud* (late night) prayer; however in order to follow this advice one must not waste time with unnecessary things like the television or radio. Today Muslims need to revitalize this Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) more.⁹²

Of course the Prophet's sleep was not like our sleep. It is hard to even call it "sleep"; for there is not a single heedless moment in his life. Imam Busiri says:

لَا تُنْكِرِ الْوَحْيَ مِنْ رُؤْيَاهُ إِنَّ لَهُ قَلْبًا إِذَا نَامَتِ الْعَيْنَانِ لَمْ يَنَمْ

"Do not deny that he gets revelation in his dream, even if his eyes sleep, his heart does not sleep."

It is just the organism or body, which sleeps and becomes inactive during sleep. This is why even though the Prophet's eyes were asleep, his heart or his soul, consciousness, and cognition was always awake with the remembrances of Allah. (Bukhari, Manaqib, 24) In this respect, a friend of Allah says that:

In order to extend the blessings of remembrance of Allah performed in the morning to the evening and to extend the blessings of remembrance of Allah performed in the evening to the morning, it should be continued while sleeping. By this way, seekers of Truth can attain many benefits and Divine inspirations and virtues.

92. Experts explain some of the benefits of this prophetic custom as follows: "Because of the melatonin released by epiphysis, it constitutes a center related to some of our psychological behaviors. It affects the sexual balance of life, protects the body against infections, makes sleepy, and regulates psychological state. In order to catch the highest level of melatonin one should go to bed at 9:00 PM and wake up at 3:00 AM. If someone is awake and gets light at that time of the day, the human body keeps releasing melatonin." (Dr. Arslan Mayda, p. 37)





The Prophet's (pbuh) usually slept after *i'sha* and before *fajr* prayers. When he had the opportunity, he would sleep about an hour after the *zuhr* (midday) prayer. This is called *qaylulah*. In this regard, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

"Help your fasting by having a meal at night and help your night worship by some afternoon sleep." (Hakim, I, 588) Thus, it is expressed that sleeping for a while in the afternoon gives a person the strength to perform the acts of worship at night.⁹³

Sleeping after the sunset and the forty-five minutes afterwards is one of the disapproved times of sleeping. What is essential is to go to bed early and wake up early. After performing the *fajr* (early morning) prayer one should be busy with remembrance of Allah, recitation of the Qur'an, and learning Islam. One may begin working in the coming hours afterwards. One should benefit from the blessings of the early morning time. Sleeping between *asr* and *maghrib* prayers is another disapproved time of sleeping.⁹⁴ Just like the early hours of the day one should use those hours wisely with remembrance and contemplation.⁹⁵

O. Manners of Sitting

"O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (Spread out and) make room: (ample) room will Allah provide for you."

(Al-Mujadila 58; 11)

The religion of Islam, which organizes every aspect of life, has established some manners for sitting, too. A Muslim cannot sit casually at random places. His/her every action is based on a principle.

93. Muhammed Es'ad Erbili says that: "The soul does not need a body to see you. Even if the eyes go to sleep at nights, the soul's path is open." (*Diwan*, p. 21)
94. According to the findings of the experts the number of heartbeats and blood pressure drops after 10:00 PM, and they begin to increase after 4:00 AM. They reach their peak levels between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM. Therefore, one should avoid sleeping after *asr* (afternoon) prayer, for it would be an invitation to all types of heart diseases and diseases related to blood pressure. This might be the reason why Muslim scholars have disapproved sleeping after *asr* prayer. (Mayda, p. 38-39)
95. Observing the customs of the Prophet (pbuh), Sufis usually prefer the night, early morning, and afternoon as times for remembrances of Allah and benefit from those hours.



There are various styles of sitting. Sitting on one's knees, cross-legged, crouching, sitting by setting one's legs up or, sitting by putting the hands back down on the ground and stretching the legs forward. Of course Allah's Messenger (pbuh) is our measure to find which one or ones of these styles are permitted.

1. Sitting Styles of the Prophet (pbuh)

The habitual sitting style of the Messenger of Allah was sitting on his knees. (Muslim, Iman, 1, 5; Bukhari, Iman, 37) However, there are other styles of sitting that were seen by the Prophet (pbuh).

One of them was to sit cross-legged. Jabir b. Samura (r.a.) reported that Allah's Apostle (pbuh) used to sit (pbuh) cross-legged after performing *fajr* (early-morning) prayer until the sun rose high. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 26)

Sitting cross-legged was one of the sitting styles that the Prophet (pbuh) liked and frequently did; for this position makes a person comfortable and covers the private parts. Thus, it is an appropriate manner of sitting. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) preferred this position not only in the mosque but also in other places of gatherings. According to the historical sources we see that companions, too, preferred this sitting position.

Another style is the one called "*kurfusa*" or "*ihtiba*." Ibn Umar (r. anhu-ma) reported:

"I saw Allah's Apostle in the courtyard of the Ka'ba in the *ihtiba* posture putting his hands around his legs like this" and then he thrust his legs to his thighs, held his knees with his arms, and sat on his buttocks." (Bukhari, Isthi'dhan, 34)

It is narrated by Qaylah daughter of Makhramah (r.anha): "When I came to accept the message of Islam, I saw the Prophet (pbuh) sitting with his arms around his legs. When I saw the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) in such a humble condition in the sitting position, I trembled with fear. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 22) This was also a sitting style chosen frequently by the Prophet (pbuh). According to Qadi Iyad Allah's Messenger (pbuh) preferred this style more than sitting cross-legged. The reason for the preference of this position is, like sitting cross-legged, it ensures the Islamic principles of covering and non-existence of the possibility of revealing private parts. Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) often sat in this position.





However, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) prohibited this sitting style on Fridays while listening to the Friday sermon. (Abu Dawud, Salat, 228) This is because it might trigger an urge to sleep and keep one from listening to the sermon. The worst of all is that it may cause one to violate the ablution requirements.

Allah's Apostle (pbuh) also sat crouching. He (pbuh) usually sat in this position, which is called "*ihatifaz*" and "*i'qa*," while eating something. Anas b. Malik (r.a.) reported:

"I saw Allah's Apostle (pbuh) squatting and eating dates." (Muslim, Ashribah, 148-149)

Another position witnessed in the life of the Prophet (pbuh) was that he sat on the edge of a well and let his legs hang down." According to an incident reported by Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (r.a.) he saw the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) sitting at the edge of well called *Aris* with his legs uncovered, hanging in the well. (Bukhari, Ashab al-Nabi, 5)

2. Sitting styles which are not approved by the Prophet (pbuh)

There are also sitting styles disapproved by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). For instance, sitting by stretching one arm back and placing the palm on the ground is one of them. Sitting by stretching both arms and placing both palms is also among the disapproved sitting styles; for this position is characterized as the sitting style of people who feel themselves superior than others.

It is narrated by Ash-Sharid ibn Suwayd (r.a.):

The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) came upon me when I was sitting thus: having my left hand behind my back and leaning on my palm, and said:

"Are you sitting in the manner of those with whom Allah is angry?" (Abu Dawud, Adab, 24)

The significant point here is that Muslims, who are honored by the blessing of Islam, are ordered to avoid resembling non-Muslims even in their sitting styles. If a sitting, lying style or any other behavior are the signs of non-Muslims; and when people see such behaviors, if they remember non-Muslims, it is believers' duty to avoid such behaviors.



Allah's Messenger (pbuh) also prohibited sitting at inappropriate places no matter what the sitting position was. One of them is to sit on or by the roads. The Prophet (pbuh) told his companions:

"Beware! Avoid sitting on the roads (ways)." They said,

"We have to do it, there is no way out of it as these are our sitting places where we talk our matters." The Prophet said,

"If you must sit there, then observe the rights of the way." They asked,

"What are the rights of the way?" He said,

"They are to lower of your gaze to avoid seeing what is illegal to look at, to refrain from harming people, to return greetings, to advocate good and forbid evil." (Bukhari, Mazalim, 22; Muslim, Libas, 114)

In other versions, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) pointed to some other rights as *"to give directions to the one who asks for them and to help to those who ask for help."*

Sitting and chatting unnecessarily on the passages of the people, watching them, and obstructing their comfortable passage are considered as indecent actions. However, when one has to do it, he should be careful about the points suggested by the Prophet (pbuh). Maybe it is to avoid sitting by the roads that believers have been accustomed to sit in the courtyards of mosques.

3. Manners of sitting amongst people and the gathering places

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) set up wonderful principles for sitting manners. For instance, he said that *"one of you should not make another man get up to sit in his place. But instead they should open space by widening the circle."* (Bukhari, Jum'a, 20) Another narration of the Prophet (pbuh) stated that one who stands up from his place and goes away and then comes back to it, he has the greatest right to sit in that place. (Muslim, Salam, 31) When companions, who were trained by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), came to the Prophet (pbuh), each one would sit down where there was room. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 14)

This is a wonderful custom of the companions that we need to take as an example. Because choosing places to sit in a gathering and trying to sit in the best places might cause to discontentment and even fights amongst people. If there is no room for those who attend a gathering late, people should widen



or tighten their circle and make room for them. This is among the manners of being in a congregation. Its significance is also mentioned in the Qur'an as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا
فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

“O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (Spread out and) make room: (ample) room will Allah provide for you.” (Al-Mujadila 58; 11)

All these principles are set to prevent fights and resentments between people, which may originate from such reasons, and also to control people in society and accustom them to follow certain manners. These principles of manners are carefully followed in the contemporary Muslim society. Willingly and expecting to receive spiritual rewards, those who are young give their places to the scholars and the elders of the congregation. These are manifestations of how much the Prophet's Sunnah has affected the Muslim nation.

Another principle of manner of being in a gathering is not to sit between two people without getting their consent first. In this context, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“One should not sit between two men except with their permission.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 21)

Separating two people by sitting between them or getting to the front rows by passing over their shoulders is not an appropriate behavior for believers; for in both of these situations there are behaviors which can cause one to hurt others. Also, there might be a secret talk or a special relation between the two people. In order to prevent such problems it is suggested to sit in the first available row in the mosques and keep the rows as tight as possible. Anas b. Malik (r.a.) narrated:

“One day when the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was giving a sermon a man arrived and came to a place close to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) by stepping over people's shoulders. After the prayer, the Prophet (pbuh) told the man:

“O so and so! What prevented you from performing the Friday prayer with us?” The man replied:

“O Messenger of Allah! I just wanted to sit in this place.” The Prophet (pbuh) told him:

“I saw you stepping over people’s shoulders and hurting them. You should know that one who hurts a believer actually hurts me and one who hurts me hurts Allah the Almighty.” (Haythami, II, 179)

Even though the man had performed his prayer and in a spot very close to the Prophet, the Prophet’s question to the man *“What prevented you from performing the Friday prayer with us?”* was to express the inappropriateness of his action. Otherwise no matter how wrong this action is, it is not something that lawfully violates the validity of prayer.

Sitting in the middle of a group to listen to a sermon or to attend a lesson is an action against the proper manners. According to Hudhaifa’s (r.a.) narration, the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) cursed the one who sat in the middle of a circle. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 14)

Such behavior, which is strongly prohibited by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), is objectionable for two reasons: First, passing to the front rows by stepping over the shoulders of people may cause harm to them. Second, sitting in the middle of a group might prevent people from seeing each other. This is also a different way of hurting people. Another reason for the wrongness of this behavior is that it manifests the psychological immaturity levity of such people.

Believers are prohibited to attend gatherings where anti-Islamic subjects are discussed. Allah the Almighty commands in the Qur’an:

“...when you hear the revelations of Allah rejected and derided, (you) sit not with them (who disbelieve and mock) until they engage in some other conversation. If you did, you would be like them...” (al-Nisa 4; 140)

According to this verse, being in congregations where the revelations of Allah are denied and His Messenger (pbuh) is ridiculed presents a serious danger to one’s faith.



However sometimes one may happen to be in places where useless subjects are discussed. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) showed the door of forgiveness for those who have to attend such gatherings in the following tradition:

"Whoever sits in gatherings where meaningless subjects are discussed and says the following supplication before leaving will be forgiven from his sins:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ

"Glorified are You O Allah! I am in your praise, I testify that there is no god but You, I ask your forgiveness and repent unto you." (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 39)

P. Manners of Accepting Invitations

"If any one of you is invited, he should accept (the invitation). In case he is fasting, he should pray (in order to bless the inmates of the house), and if he is not fasting he should eat."

Muslim, Nikah, 106

Islam declares that believers are brothers (al-Hujurat 49; 10) and attaches importance to the means of strengthening the ties amongst them. One of these means is to accept each other's invitations. Because Allah's Messenger (pbuh) counted it as one of the rights of Muslims:

"The rights of a Muslim over his fellow Muslim are five: returning greetings, visiting the sick, attending funerals, accepting invitations, and praying for him saying 'Yarhamuka-l-lah' (may Allah have mercy on you) when he sneezes." (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 1)

In another tradition, he commanded that *"When any one of you is invited to a place, he should attend it."* (Muslim, Nikah, 99) and he also showed this in his actions by accepting invitations.

It was narrated by Itban b. Malik, who was one of the Companions of the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) and who participated in the (Battle of) Badr and was among the Ansar (of Medina), that he came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and said:

“O Messenger of Allah, I have lost my eyesight and I lead my people in prayer. When there is a downpour there is then a current (of water) in the valley that stands between me and them and I find it impossible to go to their mosque and lead them in prayer. O Messenger of Allah, I earnestly beg of you that you should come and observe prayer in my house so that I should then use it as a place of worship. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

“Well, if Allah so wills. I would soon do so.” Itban said:

“On the following day when the day dawned, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came along with Abu Bakr at-Siddiq, and the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) asked permission (to get into the house). I gave him the permission, and he did not sit after entering the house. When he said:

“At what place in your house you desire me to say prayer?” I pointed to a corner in the house. The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) stood at that place for prayer and pronounced ‘*Allah-u-Akbar*’ (Allah is the Greatest) (as an expression for the commencement of prayer). We too stood behind him, and he performed a two-rak’ah prayer and then pronounced salutation (marking the end of the prayer). We invited him (the Holy Prophet) for a meal that we had prepared for him. The people of the neighboring houses came and thus there was a good gathering in our house.” (Muslim, Masajid, 263; Bukhari, Salat, 45-46)

In the tradition mentioned above, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) accepted the invitation of his companions and went to Itban’s house on the very next day after the sun rose high. After the prayer companions offered Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) a dish called *Khazira*, which is made from thinly sliced meat and flour, and he accepted the host’s offer and ate from it.

Another incident which shows that the Prophet accepted invitations occurred while digging the trenches in the Battle of Trench. When Jabir (r.a.) witnessed that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) was suffering from extreme hunger, he thought about what he could do. He then went to his home. He narrated the rest of the incident as follows:

“I said to my wife,

“I saw the Prophet in a state that I cannot treat lightly. Have you got something for him to eat?” She replied,





“I have barley and a she goat.” So I slaughtered the she-kid and she grounded the barley; then we put the meat in a pot. Then I came to the Prophet when the dough had become soft and fermented and the meat in the pot over the stone trivet had nearly been well-cooked, and said,

“I have got a little food prepared, so come with me, O Allah’s Apostle, you and one or two men along with you (for the food).” The Prophet asked,

“How much is that food?” I told him about it. He said,

“It is abundant and good. Tell your wife not to remove the pot from the fire and not to take out the bread from the oven till I reach there.” Then he said to all his companions,

“Get up.” So the Muhajirn (i.e. Emigrants) and the Ansar (Helpers) got up. When I came to my wife, I said,

“Allah’s Mercy be upon you! The Prophet came along with the Muhajirin and the Ansar and those who were present with them.” She said,

“Did the Prophet ask you (how much food you had)?” I replied,

“Yes.” Then the Prophet said,

“Enter and do not throng.” The Prophet started cutting the bread into pieces and put the cooked meat over it. He covered the earthenware pot and the oven whenever he took something out of them. He would give the food to his companions and take the meat out of the pot. He went on cutting the bread and scooping the meat for his companions till they all ate their fill, and even then, some food remained. Then the Prophet said to my wife,

“Eat and present to others as the people are struck with hunger.” (Bukhari, Maghazi, 29; Waqidi, II, 452)

In this invitation which Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) attended, a miracle occurred and a thousand people and even some neighbors satisfied their hunger with food that was actually just enough for a few people.

Another example of the Prophet’s (pbuh) attendance to invitations is as follows: Anas b. Malik (r.a.) reported:

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) led us in the afternoon prayer. When he completed it, a person from Bani Salama came to him and said:



“O Messenger of Allah, we intend to slaughter our camel and we are desirous that you should also be present there on this occasion. He (the Holy Prophet) accepted our invitation. The man went and we also went along with him and we found that the camel had not been slaughtered yet. Then it was slaughtered, and it was cut into pieces and then some of those were cooked, and then we ate them before the sunset.” (Muslim, Masajid, 196)

Our Prophet (pbuh), whose modesty and morality is proverbial, accepted the invitations of the poor and the slaves. Anas bin Malik narrated,

“My grandmother Mulaika invited Allah’s Apostle for a meal which she herself had prepared. He ate from it and said,

“Get up! I will lead you in the prayer.” Anas added,

“I took my *hasir* (straw mat), washed it with water as it had become dark because of long use and Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) stood on it. The orphan⁹⁶ and I stood behind the Prophet (pbuh) and the old lady (Mulaika) stood behind us. Allah’s Apostle led us in the prayer and offered two- rak’ah and then left.” (Bukhari, Salat, 20)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would sometimes say that:

“I shall accept the invitation even if I were invited to a meal of a sheep’s trotter; and I shall accept the gift even if it were an arm or a trotter of a sheep.” (Bukhari, Hiba, 2)

With these words Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) attracts attention to the significance of accepting invitations which establishes and maintains strong relations among the believers. The most valuable deed in this temporary world and the most acceptable one in the presence of Allah the Almighty are those which promote good human relations and pay attention to such actions that strengthen friendships.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) advised Muslim women not to look down at the things offered to them by their neighbors; for a believer should be a modest person, and he/she should accept invitations without knowing what the offer will be. He/she knows that arrogance and despising others are characteristics against Islam and avoids them.

96. The person mentioned as orphan in the tradition was Husain b. Abdullah’s grandfather Dumaira.



Accepting invitations and attending them occupy an important place in improving social relations and in socializing with other people. The attendance of wealthy, knowledgeable, and high ranked people to the invitations from poor people helps them to defeat their inner selves and earn Allah's pleasure.

1. Accepting the Invitations to Wedding Ceremonies

Allah's Messenger attached special importance to accepting invitations to wedding feast called *walima* and said that,

"If anyone of you is invited to a wedding banquet, he must go to it (accept the invitation)." (Bukhari, Nikah, 71)

"If any one of you is invited to a wedding banquet, he should accept (the invitation). If he is fasting, he should pray for the owner of the banquet, and if he is not fasting he should eat." (Muslim, Nikah, 106)

The Messenger of Allah, who advised accepting invitations to wedding ceremonies, stated that one who refuses an invitation to a banquet without an excuse *"disobeys Allah and His Apostle."* (Bukhari, Nikah, 72) Abdullah b. Umar (r. anhum), who knew the Prophet's sensibility in this regard, used to accept the invitation whether to a wedding banquet or to any other party, even when he was fasting. (Bukhari, Nikah, 74)

Imams of the four schools of Islamic law all agreed that accepting an invitation to a wedding banquet is obligatory. Other types of invitations are not obligatory like wedding invitations. This is why one should accept the invitations even if he/she is fasting. If it is an obligatory fasting, then he/she does not break it and just prays for the host. The decision of breaking or not a supererogatory fasting is completely up to him/her.

There is some wisdom behind giving so much importance to accepting the invitations to wedding banquets. Weddings are among the happiest times for people and they constitute the best moments for strengthening social relations. In such times people want to see their friends and family beside them. Besides the object of having a banquet is to let people know about the marriage. Announcing the marriage is the most essential part of it. The greater the number of the attendees is the more this object will be achieved.

Not to go to parties without an invitation or not to bring uninvited partners are also considered as among the manners of accepting invitations. In



this context, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that, *"He who enters without an invitation enters as a thief and goes out as a raider."* (Abu Dawud, At'imah, 1) If one has to take someone that originally was not invited to an event with him, then he/she should first ask the host for permission. The following incident is an exemplary one in this matter:

An Ansari man, called Abu Shu'aib, visited the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). When he saw that the Prophet's face was pale, he figured that he had not eaten anything for some time. Shu'aib (r.a.) came and told his butcher son,

"Prepare meals sufficient for five persons, for I want to invite the Prophet along with four other persons as I saw signs of hunger on his face." Abu Shu'aib invited them and another person came along with them. The Prophet said to Abu Shu'aib,

"This man followed us, so if you allow him, he will join us, and if you want him to return, he will go back." Abu Shu'aib said, "No, I have allowed him." (Bukhari, Buyu', 21)

In the tradition expressed above, the Prophet's (pbuh) explanation to the host is an example which shows what one can do in such a situation with invited guests but also with uninvited ones. This tradition also shows us how the host and the invited guests should deal with such situations.

2. Invitations which need to be accepted

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would accept the lawful invitations; but if there was going to be something against the approval of Allah at the invited place, he would not accept it. Anas b. Malik (r.a.) stated that the Prophet (pbuh) would not eat food at the tables of arrogant people, where luxurious utensils were used. (Bukhari, At'imah, 8)

The Prophet (pbuh) never joined the tables of arrogant and despot people, who saw their tables as a means of showing their superiority over others. Such people have always been the representatives of waste, luxury, vanity, and impertinence. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) especially stayed away from imitating such people and non-believers and commanded his followers to do the same.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) aimed to eliminate the gap between the poor and the wealthy and tried to provide equal opportunities to everybody in the society as much as possible. He regarded the means to achieve this goal very





important and disapproved everything which might obstruct its achievement. One of such things is to invite the wealthy but not the poor to the feasts. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) expressed his disapproval in this regard as follows:

"The worst food is that of a wedding banquet to which only the rich are invited while the poor are not invited." (Bukhari, Nikah, 72)

In short, accepting invitations is a very important prophetic custom and a social act of worship. Believers must pay attention to it just like all the other manners. However it is not permitted in Islam to accept invitations and attend to events which are organized against the orders of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh); because a believer's object in every deed he/she performs is to attain Allah's consent. He/she should stay away from everything contrary to this object.

R. Manners of Visiting

"My love is true and inevitable for those who do not cut their relations with their relatives and friends."

Ibn Hanbal, V, 229

It is the requirement of being a Muslim and the brotherhood of Islam to visit people and ask about their state. Allah the Almighty has declared all Muslims as brothers and ordered them to love and take care of each other. Visiting each other is one of the most significant ways to establish love amongst people. This is why Islam pays importance to it.

Visiting may be for various reasons, like sickness, holidays, birth, or death. There are also visits done just out of courtesy without any apparent reason. Through visits Muslims learn each other's problems and needs and so they are able to help one another. They also get the chance to share each other's opinions and experiences. Thus, they can confer their issues with each other and aid in making decisions. Hence people get the feeling that they are not alone in the community so that they can look into the future with hope and confidence. Seeing a believing brother beside one during their happy and sad moments becomes a source of peace and tranquility for them. This is why visiting friends and relatives consist of many benefits. For this reason, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) always visited his companions. Qais b. Sa'd (r.a.) narrated one of the Prophet's visits as follows:



“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) came to visit us in our house, and said:

“Peace and Allah’s mercy be upon you!” My father Sa’d returned the greeting in a lower tone.

I said to my father:

“Do you not grant permission to the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) to enter?”

He said:

“Leave him, let him give us many greetings.” The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) then said:

“Peace and Allah’s mercy be upon you!” My father again responded in a lower tone. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) said a third time:

“Peace and Allah’s mercy be upon you!” Then when the Apostle of Allah (pbuh) was going away, my father went after him and said:

“O Apostle of Allah! I heard your greetings and responded in a lower tone so that you might give us more greetings. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) returned with him. My father then offered to prepare bath-water for him, and he took a bath. He then gave him a long wrap dyed with saffron or wars and he wrapped himself in it.

The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) then raised his hands and said:

“O Allah, bestow Your blessings and mercy on the family of Sa’d b. Ubadah!” The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) then shared their meals.

When he intended to return, my father brought him an ass which was covered with a blanket. The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) mounted it.

My father said:

“O Qays, accompany the Apostle of Allah.” I said:

“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) told me to get on the ride.” But I refused.” Allah’s Apostle (pbuh) again said:

“Either ride or go back.” So I went back. (Abu Dawud, Adab, 127-128) In another narration, it was reported that Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) visited a family of Ansar, ate and performed prayer with them, and repeated supplications for them. (Bukhari, Adab, 65)





Allah's Messenger (pbuh) commanded his ummah to visit the sick and brothers in Islam. In one of his sayings, the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

"Whoever visits a sick or a Muslim brother, a caller addresses him: "What a nice deed you did. For doing this deed, your walk's reward became good, too. And you prepared a place in Paradise for yourself." (Tirmidhi, Birr, 64)

Visits should be done for the sake of Allah not for a worldly benefit. Allah the Almighty states that He loves those who sincerely visit each other. In a *qudsi* saying of the Prophet (pbuh) it is stated that:

"For those who love each other for My sake, and for those who give charity for My sake, and for the righteous ones who sincerely love each other for My sake, and for those who do not cut their relations with their relatives and friends My love is true and inevitable" (Ibn Hanbal, V, 229)

It is possible to count the types of visits advised by Allah and His Messenger (pbuh) from the life of our excellent Exemplar, the Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

1. Visiting the Sick

"He who visits the sick continues to remain in the fruit garden of Paradise until he returns."

Muslim, Birr, 39

Health and sickness are two important means of a test and warning in this world. We should not get heedless and stop thanking and praising Allah the Almighty during our healthy moments. We should also try to get closer to Allah with our prayers and supplications during our times of sickness. Smart believers who appreciate both of these situations will eventually be the profiting ones.

People suffer from various diseases at every age. Diseases are sources of sadness and distress. During such times people want to see their friends and relatives next to them. They want to be consoled by their words and help. If relatives and friends do not visit them the sick person may become sadden by this. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) ordered everybody to visit the sick. Bara b. Adhib (r.a.) said that:



“Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) ordered us to follow the funeral procession, to visit the sick, to accept invitations, to help the oppressed, to fulfill the oaths, to return the greeting and to reply to the sneezer: saying, “May Allah be merciful on you,” provided the sneezer says, “All the praises are for Allah.” (Bukhari, Janaiz, 2; Muslim, Libas, 3)

When a person gets sick he/she becomes very sensitive and heartbroken. Allah the Almighty is closer to such heartbroken people. Since Allah the Almighty likes that his servants visit the sick, He considers them as visits done to Him. According to Abu Huraira’s (r.a.) report, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) states this fact as follows:

“Verily, Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, would say on the Day of Resurrection:

“O son of Adam, I was sick but you did not visit Me.” He would say:

“O my Lord; how could I visit You whereas You are the Lord of the worlds?” Thereupon He would say:

“Did not you know that such and such servant of Mine was sick but you did not visit him and were you not aware of this that if you had visited him, you would have found Me by him? O son of Adam, I asked food from you but you did not feed Me.” He would say:

“My Lord, how could I feed You whereas You are the Lord of the worlds?” He said:

“Did not you know that such and such servant of Mine asked food from you but you did not feed him, and were you not aware that if you had fed him you would have found him by My side?” The Lord would again say:

“O son of Adam, I asked for a drink from you but you did not provide it to Me.” He would say:

“My Lord, how could I provide it to You whereas You are the Lord of the worlds?” Thereupon, He would say:

“Such and such servant of Mine asked you for a drink but you did not provide him with it, and had you provided him with a drink you would have found him near Me.” (Muslim, Birr, 43)





Therefore, servants should think about whom they are visiting and whose orders they are fulfilling. This is why Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told his companions that when they visited a sick person, they should ask for supplications from him and they should know that the supplication of a sick person was like the prayers of angels. (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 1)

Visiting the sick means asking about his/her state, consoling him/her, and taking care of his/her needs as much as it is possible. Therefore, visiting sick people becomes a reiterated prophetic custom. Some scholars even think it is obligatory. If no Muslim in the neighborhood visits a sick person of their neighborhood, everybody in that neighborhood becomes responsible. Therefore, visiting a person who is sick becomes a communal obligatory act like feeding the hungry.

Ibn Umar (r. anhum) narrated an incident in this regard as follows:

"While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), a person, one of the Ansar, came to him and greeted him. The Ansari then turned back. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"O brother of Ansar! How is my brother Sa'd be Ubada?" He said:

"He is better." The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said:

"Who amongst you would visit him?" He (the Holy Prophet) stood up and we also got up along with him, and we were more than ten persons. We had neither shoes with us, or socks, or caps, or shirts. We walked on the barren land till we came to him. The people around him kept away till the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and his Companions with him came near Sa'd b. Ubada." (Muslim, Janaiz, 13)

Aisha (r. anha) narrated another incident which explains this wonderful characteristic of the Prophet (pbuh):

"Sa'd was wounded on the day of Khandaq (i.e. Trench) when a man from Quraish, called Hibban bin Al-Araqa hit him (with an arrow). The man was Hibban bin Qais from (the tribe of) Bani Mais bin Amir b. Lu'ai who shot an arrow at Sa'd's medial arm vein (or main artery of the arm). The Prophet pitched a tent for Sa'd in the Mosque so that he might be near to the Prophet to visit... (Bukhari, Maghazi, 30)



As it can be observed in these reports, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) was concerned about all kinds of problems which people had. Asking about the problems of the sick, visiting his friends, taking care of the needs of the needy, attending the funerals and performing their funeral prayers, and consoling the people left behind are some of the good behaviors manifested in his life. He would usually be accompanied by some of his companions while performing a social duty like visiting a sick person. Thus, he would discipline them about the matter in question. For being poor and needy is not an obstacle for visiting the sick. On the contrary, this would make people get closer to each other, help each other to take care of their needs, and share the blessings they have.

In visiting the sick there should be no difference between being a Muslim and non-Muslim; acquaintance and stranger; close and far neighbor. Indeed Allah's Messenger (pbuh) visited a sick Jewish kid and caused him to convert to Islam. (Bukhari, Janaiz, 80)

In his following lines Jalal al-Din Rumi (q.s.) elegantly depicts that visiting the sick actually benefits the visitor himself:

"There is profit in your visiting the sick: the profit thereof is returning to you again. The first profit is that the sick person may perchance be a Qutb and a glorious spiritual king. And if he be not a Qutb, he may be a friend of the Sufi Way; if he be not the king, he may be the cavalier of the host. Deem it, then, incumbent on you to attach yourselves to the friends of the Way, whosoever it may be, and whether he be footman or rider. And if he be a foe to you, still this kindness is good, for by kindness many a foe hath been made a friend; And though he do not become a friend, his enmity is lessened, because kindness becomes the balm for enmity. There are many profits besides these, but I am afraid of being tedious, good friend. The gist (of the matter) is this: be the friend of the whole community (of Sufis): like the idol-maker, carve a friend out of the stone, because the throng and multitude of a caravan will break the backs and spears of the highwaymen. Inasmuch as you have not the heart's two eyes, O contumacious man, so that you cannot distinguish firewood from aloes wood. (You may despair of finding the true friend of Allah; but) since there exists a treasure in the world, do not grieve: deem no ruined place empty of treasure." (Mathnawi, II, 2143-2153)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) taught some supplications to the sick people. Uthman b. Abu al-'As Al-Thaqafi reported that he made a complaint of a pain



to Allah's Messenger (pbuh) that he felt in his body at the time he had become Muslim. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said: Place your hand at the place where you feel pain in your body and say "*Bismillah*" (in the name of Allah) three times and say

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ وَقُدْرَتِهِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا أَجِدُ وَأُحَازِرُ

"I seek refuge with Allah and with His Power from the evil that I find and that I fear" seven times (Muslim, Salam, 67).

Uthman (r.a.) practiced this supplication word by word and said: "I did what the Messenger of Allah taught me. Allah the Almighty blessed me with my health. After that I recommended this supplication to my family and other people." (Abu Dawud, Tib, 19)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) advised to inculcate to people that are about to die to say "*La ilaha illa-llah* – There is no god but Allah" (Muslim, Janaiz, 1-2)

Companions paid attention to visiting the sick, too.

Some of the principles of manners in visiting sick as follows:

a. The visitor should put his hand over the sick's hand or forehead, and ask "how are you?" The Prophet (pbuh) advised to care closely for the sick. However, the doctor's orders must be considered in this regard. Also, this principle is not applicable for cases of contagious diseases.

b. One should avoid the words and actions which might hurt and depress the sick. Visits should be kept short.

c. One should ask the sick if there is anything he/she needs, and if it is needed, one should financially help the sick, too. If it is not going to harm the sick, one may give food and other gifts to the sick. Ibn Abbas (r. anhum) narrated:

"Allah's Messenger (pbuh) visited a sick person and asked:

"Is there anything that you would like?" The man said:

"Wheat bread." Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told his companions:

"Whoever has wheat bread with him should send it to his brother." And then he added:

“If your patient wants something from you, let him eat that.” (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 2)

d. A person who is sick may contemplate about death and feel disturbed. It is a nice thing to console such patients with appropriate words, to explain to them that death is an order of Allah and it is inevitable, to explain to them that being ill does not mean its end will be death, and that ailments become compensation for the evil deeds of a servant. According to the narration of Ibn ‘Abbas (r. anhumā): “Allah’s Apostle visited a sick bedouin and said to him, *“Don’t worry, Tahur (i.e., your illness will be a means of compensation for your sins), if Allah will.”* (Bukhari, Tawhid, 31)

e. Praying for the sick and wishing for his/her recovery is one of the manners of visiting the sick. Aisha (r. anha) narrated:

“When any person amongst us fell ill, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) used to rub him with his right hand and then say:

“O Lord of the people, ease his pain and grant him health, heal him, for You are a Great Healer. There is no healer, but with Your healing Power. Bestow upon this person health so that no sign of the disease could be seen upon him.” (Bukhari, Marda, 20; Muslim, Salam, 46-49)

Salman (r.a.) narrated: “When I was sick, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) came to visit me. When he was leaving, he prayed for me saying:

يَا سَلْمَانَ! كَشَفَ اللَّهُ ضُرَّكَ وَغَفَرَ ذَنْبَكَ
وَعَافَاكَ فِي دِينِكَ وَجَسَدِكَ إِلَى أَجَلِكَ

“O Salman! May Allah remove your problems, May He forgive your sins, May He give your religion and your body strength until your death (time)” (Haythami, II, 299)

f. For some reasons, like distance, etc. if one could not find the opportunity to visit his/her sick brother he/she should at least give them their wishes for a quick recovery through an agent or other means of communication, like a phone call.





2. Offering Condolences

“Believers who are inflicted upon a calamity should think about my death to console themselves and be patient.”

Muwatta, Janaiz, 41

Even though the Arabic word “*ta’ziyah*” refers to consoling those who are inflicted upon a trouble, it usually implies to visiting a funeral house and expressing one’s condolences. It is necessary to advise patience to people who are inflicted upon a trouble, remind them to have faith in destiny, and tell them that such troubles are the means of attaining spiritual maturity. Moreover, it might have some effect in consoling them to say that “Allah the Almighty increases His servant’s spiritual rewards because of his suffering.” It is among the most important manners of *ta’ziyah* to pray for such people by saying “May Allah increase your rewards” and “May Allah bestow upon you the best patience.”

Ta’ziyah can be done by personally visiting the people who experience the hardship or by calling them or sending them a message. Once when Zainab (r. anha), the Prophet’s daughter, sent a message to her father saying that:

“My son passed away. Could you please come to our house?” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) sent someone along with his greetings to his daughter saying:

“Allah is the One who gives and takes back. Everything has a time in His presence. Tell her to be patient and expect its rewards from Allah the Almighty.” (Bukhari, Janaiz, 33)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that *ta’ziyah* was a very important humanistic duty and added that: *“Allah the Almighty will clothe a garment of honor upon a believer who visits his brother suffering from a trouble.”* (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 56)

The following letter of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) to Mu’adh b. Jabal (r.a.) for the death of his son is an elegant and beautiful example of expressing one’s condolences:

“In the name of Allah,

From Muhammad the Messenger of Allah to Mu’adh b. Jabal



May Allah's peace be upon you

I would like you to know that I praise Allah that there is no god save Him. May Allah increase your reward; may He bestow great blessings and the power of patience upon you. May He let us and you succeed in thanking Him; because our lives, possessions, family and children are His gifts entrusted to us temporarily.

Allah made you happy by giving you that child. Now He takes him back in return for a great reward. If you hope to receive mercy, forgiveness, and guidance from Allah the Most Exalted, be patient. Do not let your grief and pain make your reward disappear. Otherwise you will feel regret. You should know that wailing and complaining cannot bring anything back and remove the grief and pain. What is predestined to happen has happened. Peace (be upon you)! ” (Hakim, III, 307)

In addition to consoling a person in grief with words, one may also need to help him with actions. Indeed when the news of Ja'far b. Tayyar's (r.a.) martyrdom reached the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), he said: *“Prepare food for the family of Ja'far for there came upon them an incident which has engaged them.”* (Abu Dawud, Janaiz, 25-26)

There is still a custom in Turkey that neighbors bring food to the funeral house for a few days which is a nice reflection of this prophetic advice.

Expressing one's condolences is an Islamic manner; however continuing to express condolences for more than three days is regarded as objectionable. This is to prevent from keeping the grief which one feels fresh in their mind. Those who are not present at the funeral because of distance are exempted from this rule.

3. Funeral Preparation and Visiting Graves

a. Funeral Preparation

“O you who believe! Fear Allah, and let every soul look to what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow.”

(Al-Hashr 59; 18)

The term *tashyi* means to prepare the dead and take the body to the graveyard after the funeral prayer. This is one of the final duties which needs to be done for a believer. Allah the Almighty promises great rewards for this duty.





The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) taught what needs to be done for funeral preparation through his actions. Umm Salama reported:

“The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) came to Abu Salama (as he died). His eyes were fixedly open. He closed them, and then said:

“When the soul is taken away the sight follows it.” Some of the people of his family wept and wailed. So he said:

“Do not supplicate for yourselves anything but good, for angels say “Amin” to what you say.” He then said:

“O Allah, forgive Abu Salama, raise his degree among those who are rightly guided, grant him a successor in his descendants who remain. Forgive us and him, O Lord of the Universe, and make his grave spacious, and grant him light in it.” (Muslim, Janaiz, 7)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) suggested the dead to be washed by loyal believers (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 8) and asked his followers to pay special attention to the dead, to wash and enshroud them nicely. The rewards of those who wash the dead and do not tell their defects to anybody are stated as follows:

“Allah the Almighty will forty times forgive those who wash the dead and do not tell their defects to anybody. He will clothe those who enshroud the dead with the silk clothes of Paradise. He will give rewards to those who dig graves for the dead as much as the rewards that could be given to someone who places a poor in a house till the Judgment Day.” (Hakim, I, 505-506)

Umm Atiyya reported:

“The Apostle of Allah (pbuh) came to us when we were bathing his daughter, and he told us:

“Begin washing her from her right side. Wash her with water and with the leaves of the sidr⁹⁷, three, five, or seven times, or more than that if you think fit,

97. The Sidr tree (also known as Lote tree, Christ’s Thorn, Jujube or Nabkh tree. Botanical name: *Ziziphus spina-christi*) is an ancient tree grown in Arabian Peninsula. It is from the cherry tree family, and its leaves are used in washing a believer’s dead body. (Âsim Efendi, *Kâmus*, II, 385)



and put camphor or something like camphor in the last washing; then inform me when you have finished.”

We entwined the hair of the dead daughter of the Prophet into three braids. One braid was entwined in front and the other two were entwined on the sides of the head. When we had finished, we informed him, and he gave to us his (own) under-garment and told us to shroud her in it.⁹⁸ (Bukhari, Janaiz, 9, 13, 17; Muslim, Janaiz, 36; Ibn Sa’d, VIII, 34-36)

It is very important to bid our farewell to the dead by going with him till the graveyard, by praying for his soul, and by bearing a positive testimony about him; for Allah the Almighty will treat him in accordance with such testimonies.

It was narrated by Anas bin Malik (r.a.):

“When the Messenger of Allah was with some of his companions a funeral procession passed and the people praised the deceased. The Prophet said,

“It has been affirmed to him.” Then another funeral procession passed and the people spoke badly of the deceased. The Prophet said,

“It has been affirmed to him.” Umar bin Al-Khattab (r.a.) asked Allah’s Apostle (pbuh):

“What has been affirmed?” He replied,

“You praised this, so Paradise has been affirmed to him; and you spoke badly of this, so Hell has been affirmed to him; because you, believers, are Allah’s witnesses on earth.” (Bukhari, Janaiz, 86; Muslim, Janaiz, 60)

It is a reality that people would not easily agree upon praising or speaking badly about a person. This is why we should remember this and act accordingly to make others praise us after we die.

After preparing the body, believers pray to Allah, perform the funeral prayer, say their praises to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), and ask for forgiveness for the dead. This is a means of mercy for the dead. This is why one should hope that many people will be present at his funeral and pray for him. Awwf b. Malik reported that Allah’s Messenger would attend to the funeral prayers and

98. **Shroud proper to the teachings of the Prophet** (pbuh) consist of three pieces, i.e. *izar*, *qamis*, and *lifafa*, for males and five pieces, i.e. *izar*, *qamis*, *lifafa*, a head cover and a cover for the breasts for females.



say supplications for the dead as follows: □ “Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) led a funeral prayer. Just then I heard him saying the following supplication:

“O Allah! *Forgive him, have mercy upon him, give him peace and absolve him. Receive him with honor and make his grave spacious; wash him with water, snow and hail. Cleanse him from faults as You would cleanse a white garment from impurity. Requite him with an abode more excellent than his abode, with a family better than his family, and with a mate better than his mate. Admit him to the Garden, and protect him from the torment of the grave and the torment of the Fire.*” When I heard this wonderful supplication, I earnestly desired that I were that dead body. (Muslim, Janaiz, 85)

Allah’s Apostle said,

“(A believer) who accompanies the funeral procession of a Muslim out of sincere faith and who hopes to attain Allah’s reward and remains with it till the funeral prayer is offered and the burial ceremonies are over, he will return with a reward of two ‘qirats’. Each ‘qirat’ is like the size of the (Mount) Uhud. He who offers the funeral prayer only and returns before the burial will return with the reward of one ‘qirat’ only.” (Bukhari, Iman, 35)

Sa’d b. Abi Waqqas reported on the authority of his father that while he was sitting along with Abdullah b. Umar, Khabbab b. Arat, the owner of Maqsura, came and said:

“O Ibn Umar, have you heard what Abu Huraira says?” And then he narrated the following tradition:

“Abu Huraira heard the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) say:

“*He who goes out with the bier when taken out from its residence and offers prayer for it and he then follows it till it is buried, he would have two ‘qirats’ of reward, each ‘qirat’ being equivalent to Uhud; and he who, after having offered prayer, (directly) goes back would have his reward (as great) as Uhud*”

Ibn Umar (r. anhumā) sent Khabbab to Aisha (r. anha) in order to ask her about the words of Abu Huraira and also told him to come back to him (Ibn Umar) and inform him what Aisha said. (In the meanwhile,) Ibn Umar took up a handful of pebbles and turned them over in his hand till the messenger (Khabbab) came back to him and told (him) that Aisha testified (the statement

of) Abu Huraira. Ibn Umar threw the pebbles he had in his hand on the ground and then said:

“We missed a large number of *qirats*.” (Muslim, Janaiz, 56)

It is recommended that one should carry a casket for ten steps holding each handle thus for the total of forty steps. Carrying the casket for more steps makes the carrier earn more spiritual rewards. The coffin should be carried first from the right side front handle and next right back handle and then from the front and back left handles. Hurrying up with the funeral ceremony is also among the suggestions of the Prophet (pbuh) (Bukhari, Janaiz, 51); because it is not advisable that the corpse of a Muslim should remain withheld among his family. (Abu Dawud, Janaiz, 34)

Coffins should be carried quiescently. When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) saw people carrying a coffin in haste, he told them “*Carry it quiescently.*” (Ibn Majah, Janaiz, 15)

Those who follow the funeral procession should avoid unnecessary talks and lower their voices. Even loud remembrances of Allah and recitation of the Qur’an are not considered appropriate. One should contemplate about death and the afterlife.

If it is possible, people should not be on rides. It is considered objectionable to on a ride if it is possible to walk. According to the Thawban’s (r.a.) report, Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) attended a funeral. He saw some people on rides, in order to state the disrespectfulness of this action, he said that:

“*Aren’t you ashamed? You go on rides while Allah’s angels are on foot.*” (Tirmidhi, Janaiz, 28)

The Prophet said, “Whenever you see a funeral procession, stand up till the procession goes ahead of you.” In another version of the tradition it was stated that, “Till the coffin leaves you behind or is put down.” (Bukhari, Janaiz, 47-48)

b. Visiting Cemeteries

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) had temporarily forbidden visiting graves, at the time when people were still prostrating before the graves and using them as means of pride and worshipping the idols. Later Jews and Christians turned



the graves of their saints into places of worship. Idolatry, too, had begun by showing respect to prominent figures' graves and statues, and in time they were changed into idols; whereas, Islam's goal is to place the belief in the unity and oneness of Allah the Almighty into the hearts. After this goal had been achieved, the prohibition of visiting cemeteries had been abolished. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

"I forbade you to visit graves, but you may now visit them." (Muslim, Janaiz, 106)

And the Prophet's saying, *"...Those who wish to visit graves may do so; for visiting graves reminds us of the Hereafter;"* (Tirmidhi, Janaiz, 60) emphasizes that the object of visiting cemeteries is to remember the afterlife and be prepared for it.

Visiting the graves of righteous people, parent, and the graves of the close relatives are accepted as recommended (*mandub*) acts.⁹⁹ Visiting graves is recommended for men. It is also permitted for women provided that they do not wail, do not show excessive respect towards the graves, and do not tear their clothes up. Hence, the Prophet (pbuh) advised patience to a woman who was crying over her son's grave, but he did not forbid her to visit. (Bukhari, Janaiz, 7; Muslim, Janaiz, 15) There is also another report that Aisha (r. anha) visited her brother Abdurrahman b. Abi Bakr's grave. (Tirmidhi, Janaiz, 61)

Ali (r.a.) expressed his concern about the afterlife addressing the dead in a cemetery as follows:

"The houses you left are now occupied by others

Your property is already shared

Others married with your wives

This is what is happening on our side

I wish we could know what is happening on your side

By Allah, if they were allowed to speak, they would say

99. **Mandub:** In Islamic *fiqh* this term describes the deeds which are recommended for Muslims, but are not necessary for a Muslim to do to be considered faithful. Even though they are recommended deeds, not performing them is not considered a sin, and they are the deeds that Allah's Messenger (pbuh) sometimes performed and sometimes did not.

“...but the best of provisions is right conduct (fear of Allah)...”

(al-Baqarah 2; 197) (Ibn Abdilbarr, *al-Iqd al-Farid*, III, 236-37)

There are great benefits in visiting the graves of righteous people and the graves of the religiously prominent figures. Such visits are allowed provided that one acts consciously, attains necessary lessons, and does not take false creeds during the visit. One day Marwan (r.a.) saw a man who placed his face upon the Prophet's (pbuh) grave. He thought this was an un-Islamic deed. He took the man by his collar and said:

“What do you think you are doing?” When the man turned his face, Marwan recognized that he was Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (r.a.). When Abu Ayyub (r.a.) saw that Marwan (r.a.) was concerned about the lawfulness of his act, he told him:

“Yes, I know what I am doing. I came to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) not to his grave stone. I heard the Prophet (pbuh) saying that:

“Do not be worried as long as your religious affairs are taken care of by qualified people. However when unqualified people begin to interfere with them, then you have every right to get worried and cry for the religion.” (Ibn Hanbal, V, 422)

What we understand from Abu Ayyub's (r.a.) response is that visiting graves is permissible as long as it is done consciously and according to its manners; because this is beneficial both for the visitor and the visited. These benefits can be summarized as follows:

– Visiting graves reminds people of death and the Hereafter, leads them to piety and righteousness, and enables them to attain lessons from it. Those who think about death perform their acts of worship more sincerely. They lose their ambition towards this world, avoid unlawful acts, turn to do righteous deeds, and pay more attention to getting prepared for the afterlife.

“Aisha (r. anha) said that a Jewess came to her and mentioned the punishment that takes place in the grave, saying to her,

“May Allah protect you from the punishment of the grave.” Aisha then asked Allah's Apostle about the punishment of the grave. He said,

“Yes, (there is) punishment in the grave.” Aisha added, “After that I never saw Allah's Apostle but seeking refuge with Allah from the punishment in the



grave in every prayer he prayed.” (Bukhari, Janaiz, 87; Muslim, Masajid, 123; Nasai, Janaiz, 115)

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that:

“When one of you finishes the recitation of ‘tahiyyat’ at the end of his prayer, he/she should say that:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ وَمِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَمِنْ فِتْنَةِ
الْمَحْيَا وَالْمَمَاتِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ فِتْنَةِ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ

“O Allah! I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave, and I seek refuge with You from the trial of the Masih al-Dajjal (Antichrist) and I seek refuge with You from the trial of life and death.” (Muslim, Masajid, 128; See also Muslim Masajid, 130-134; Abu Dawud, Salat, 149, 179; Nasai, Sahv, 64)

Uthman (r.a.) would cry till his beard got wet when he stood by the graves. When he was told:

“You do not cry when you remember Paradise and Hell; but you cry when you remember the grave” he replied:

“Because I heard Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) saying:

“The grave is the first station of the Hereafter. If someone passes it, the following stations will be easier. If he cannot pass it, the rest will be much harder and harsher... None of the scenes I have seen was more fearful and gruesome than the grave.” (Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 5/2308; Ahmad b. Hanbal, I, 63-64)

Bara (r.a.) narrated:

“We were with the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in a funeral. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) sat by the grave and began to cry so much that the earth got wet from his tears. And then he said that:

“O Brothers! Get well prepared for the death which everyone will experience.” (Ibn Majah, Zuhd, 19)

Before the prophet Dhu’l Qarnain (pbuh) passed away, he made the following exemplary will for the future generations:



“Wash and enshroud my body. And then place me in a coffin. Just leave my arms hanging outside the coffin. Let my servants come behind me. Load my treasures upon asses so that people can see that I had a magnificent kingdom and wealth in this world; but I left everything behind and I am leaving this world with nothing. All my servants and treasures are staying in this world. Thus they would not be deceived by this lying and temporary world...”

His will was carried out exactly. Muslim scholars interpreted this will as follows:

“I ruled the East and West with the armies following me. I had countless soldiers and servants in my service. None of them went against my orders. The entire world was under my command. I had limitless treasures. But all the blessings of this world are temporary. Just like you see I leave this world and go to my grave empty handed... Possessions of this world stay in this world... You should do the deeds beneficial for the Hereafter... (Osman Nûri Topbaş, *Nebîler Silsilesi*, II, 17)

– Visiting the graves of righteous peoples, especially the Prophet’s (pbuh) grave, gives the souls relief and makes people feel lofty feelings. Setting off on a journey to visit the Prophet’s grave and the graves of the friends of Allah is recommended (*mandub*). Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) said that, “*whoever visits me after my death my intercession will be required for him.*” (Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, V, 245)

- Visiting graves strengthens people’s ties with their culture and history. Graves of the prominent figures of history provide a bridge between young generations and their history. The spiritual atmosphere here plays an important role in keeping the religious life robust. The most typical example of this is the cities of central Asia, such as Samarkand and Bukhara, which were under the rule of communist regime for many years.

Visiting graves is also useful for the dead.

– After visiting graves people pray for the salvation, forgiveness, and eternal happiness of the dead. They recite the Qur’an and ask Allah to accept the spiritual rewards of their deeds to be written for the dead. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) stated that:

“*When one of you dies, take him to his grave right away. When you bury him, the person waiting at the side of his head should recite the chapter Fatiha*



(chapter 1) and the person waiting at the side of his feet should recite the last verses from the chapter al-Baqara (chapter 2.) (Tabari, XII, 340; Daylami, I, 284; Haythami, III, 44)

“...Chapter Yasin is like the heart of the Qur'an. Whoever reads it hoping for Allah's content and the abode of the afterlife, his sins will certainly be forgiven. Recite the chapter Yasin to your deceased.” (Ibn Hanbal, V, 26)

Ala' b. Lajlaj narrated that his father Lajlaj, who was one of the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) made the following will at the time of his death:

“When you put me into my grave, say “بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَ عَلَى سُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ” (In the name of Allah and upon the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah)¹⁰⁰ and throw earth upon my body. Recite the beginning and last verses of the chapter al-Baqara at my grave. Of course I witnessed that Abdullah b. Umar (r. an-huma) had deemed this practice appropriate.” (Bayhaqi, *al-Sunan al-Kubra*, IV, 56)

Amr b. al-As said when he was about to die: “...When you bury me, fill my grave well with earth, then stand around it for the time within which a camel is slaughtered and its meat is distributed so that I may enjoy your intimacy and in your company ascertain what answer I can give to the messengers (angels) of Allah.” (Muslim, Iman, 192)

Nawawi, who mentioned this narration in his book, reported the following words of Imam Shafii:

“Reciting chapters and verses from the Qur'an is a recommended act in Islam. Reciting the entire Qur'an is better.” (Nawawi, *Riyadh al-Salihin*, p. 293)

Recitation of the Qur'an is an offering for the dead. It is also confirmed by the authentic traditions of the Prophet (pbuh) and by the consensus of the scholars that the spiritual rewards of the good deeds performed on behalf of the dead will reach him. (*Muwatta*, Itq, 13-14; Muslim, Siyam, 155-156; Ibn Hanbal, II, 509; VI, 252) This is also supported by the following verse:

“...Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancor (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord! You art indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful.” (al-Hasr 59; 10)

100. This means: “We leave you here in the name of Allah and upon the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah.”

Another tradition in this context was narrated by Ibn Abbas (r. anhumā):

“The mother of Sa’d bin Ubada died in his absence. Sa’d came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said,

“O Allah’s Apostle! My mother died in my absence; will it be of any benefit for her if I give charity on her behalf?” The Prophet said,

“Yes,” Sa’d said,

“I make you a witness that I donated my garden called Al-Makhraf in charity on her behalf.” (Bukhari, Wasaya, 15)

- Planting trees on the gravesite is also a nice thing to do. Plants and trees planted in the graveyards help to reduce the punishment of the dead. (Muslim, Taharah, 111) Ottomans would plant sycamore trees in the yards of institutions and cypress trees in the graveyards. The reason of these choices was that the sycamore tree loses its leaves, and thus is a reminder of death and temporariness; whereas, the cypress is evergreen and it represents the eternity of the afterlife. These practices also helped to protect the environment.

- Sending wreathes to funerals is something objectionable in Islam. The wreath, which is a symbol of the Ancient Greek and Christian world, does not contain any benefit to the dead. It is also a manifestation of resembling non-believers, which is strongly prohibited in Islam. In addition, a lot of money is spent on making a wreath and many flowers are destroyed in the process. Thus, a wreath is a waste and Islam prohibits being wasteful.

Clapping at funeral ceremonies is another objectionable custom of the contemporary world. Such a behavior does not fit into the spiritual atmosphere of the funeral. In this regard, Allah the Almighty reprimands the unbelievers in the Qur’an as follows:

“And their worship at the (holy) House is naught but whistling and hand-clapping...” (al-Anfal 8; 35)

c. Manners of Visiting Cemeteries

- When the visitor arrives at the graveyard, he/she turns his/her face to the graves and greets them as taught by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh):



السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ دَارَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ بِكُمْ لَاحِقُونَ. أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ لَنَا وَلَكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ

“Peace be upon you! The abode of the believing people and we, if Allah so wills, are about to join you.” (Muslim, Taharah, 39; Janaiz, 104)

- One should pray for the dead and think about how one day he/she will join them. He/she should approach the graves and turn his/her face to the grave like there is someone alive in it and they will talk. If one is not sick, one should stay standing. If the dead was someone close to him/her, he/she should get very close to the grave; and if was not, he/she should keep some distance between him and the grave and pray.

- Performing ritual prayer in the graveyards and turning them into mosques is a disapproved action. Performing prayer towards a grave is also not accepted in Islam.

- Placing and lighting candles by the graves are not permitted. (*Muwatta*, Janaiz, 12-13)

- Sitting on the graves and stepping over them are not permitted. (Muslim, Janaiz, 98)

- One should stay away from talking inappropriate and useless matters in the graveyard. He/she should also avoid walking arrogantly and should act humbly. (Nasai, Janaiz, 100)

- Relieving oneself in the graveyards is forbidden.

- Cutting trees and green plants in the graveyard is disapproved.

- Slaughtering animals next to the graves is objectionable even if it is done for Allah. It is strongly prohibited, if it is done for the dead. There are some scholars who consider this as accepting partners to Allah; because slaughtering animals is an act of worship and acts of worship are done only for Allah the Almighty.

- Circumambulation around the graves, like circumambulating around the Ka’bah, is not permitted.

– Asking for help from the dead and tying strings and pieces of clothes to the grave in order to receive help from the dead are not allowed in Islam and have no benefit to anybody. The body in the grave could not even help himself let alone helping others. However, when asking for something from Allah the Almighty, asking for it for the sake of righteous servants of Allah and visiting their graves is permitted. For instance, it is allowed to say “O Lord! Please grant me my wishes for the sake of Your Messenger, I pray to You with Your Messenger” (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 118; Ibn Hanbal, IV, 138)

An interesting example of this is follows:

After the death of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) a severe drought in Medina occurred. People came to Aisha (r. anha) and complained. Aisha (r. anha) told them:

“Go to the Prophet’s grave and open a window on the roof of it so that there would be nothing between Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) and the skies.”

After the people fulfilled her advice, rain poured down, everywhere got green, and camels got fat. That year was even called “*‘am al-fatk* – year of abundance.” (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 15)

– It is more rewarding to visit graves especially on Fridays or Thursdays and Saturdays. However, one may visit graves on other days, too.

– It is permitted to visit graves at nights. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) went to the cemetery of Jannat al-Baqi and prayed. (Muslim, Taharah, 39; Janaiz, 104)

4. Manners of Visiting Relatives and Friends

“Whoever is pleased that he be granted more wealth and that his lease of life be prolonged, then he should keep good relations with his kith and kin.”

Bukhari, Adab, 12

One of the things that Islam emphasizes strongly is “*sila-i rahim*.” *Sila-i rahim* means to strengthen and maintain relationships amongst relatives. If they do not live far away, one should frequently visit his/her relatives, help them, and be concerned with their problems. When they are happy, one should congratulate them, whereas console them at their sad moments. If they live in





a distant place, then one should sometimes visit them and keep his/her connection through means of communication. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

“...and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; ...” (al-Nisa 4; 1)

Allah the Almighty attracts our attention to the significance of this issue by mentioning to be careful about Him and to be careful about keeping ties of relationship in the same sentence.

Although, *sila-i rahim* is primarily about one's relation with his/her relatives, it also is a responsibility towards neighbors, friends, colleagues, brothers in religion, and other acquaintances. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

“Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good - to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the Companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and what your right hands possess...” (al-Nisa 4; 36)

Severing the ties with relatives and treating them badly is a sin in Islam. The extent of goodness varies in accordance with the closeness of the relationship. Allah's Messenger (pbuh) stated that trustworthiness and kinship would be a measure in crossing over the bridge to Paradise. These qualities will be sent before one and will stand on the right and left of the bridge to Paradise. And they will catch anyone who did not fulfill these responsibilities properly by hooks and throw them into Hell fire. (Muslim, Iman, 329) Therefore, it does not look likely that those who cannot pass the test of establishing good kinship ties will not be able to pass the Path.

The following traditions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) manifests how significant this matter in Islam:

The Prophet (pbuh) said,

“Allah created His creation, and when He had finished it, the kinship got up and caught hold of Allah whereupon Allah said,

“What is the matter?” On that, it said, “I seek refuge with you from those who sever the ties of kith and kin.” On that, Allah said, “Will you be satisfied if I bestow My favors on him who keeps your ties, and withhold My favors from him who severs your ties?” On that, it said, “Yes, O my Lord!” Then, Allah said, “That is for you.” Then the Prophet (pbuh) added:



“If you wish, you can recite:

“Would you then if you were given the authority, do mischief in the land and sever your ties of kinship. Such are the men whom Allah has cursed for He has made them deaf and blinded their sight.” (Muhammad 47; 22) (Bukhari, Tafsir, 47; Muslim, Birr, 16)

One should pay much attention to keeping his/her family ties strong. Even if our relatives sever their ties with us, we should keep in contact with them with the Hereafter in mind and listen to their problems. A person said:

“Allah’s Messenger, I have relatives with whom I try to have close relationship, but they sever (this relation). I treat them well, but they treat me ill. I am sweet to them but they are harsh towards me. Upon this he (the Holy Prophet) said:

“If it is so as you say, then you in fact throw hot ashes (upon their faces) and there would always remain with you on behalf of Allah (an Angel to support you) who would keep you dominant over them so long as you adhere to this (path of righteousness).” (Muslim, Birr, 22)

Another saying was narrated by Abdullah bin Amr (r.a.):

“The Prophet said,

“‘Al-Wasil’ is not the one who recompenses the good done to him by his relatives, but ‘Al-Wasil’ is the one who keeps good relations with those relatives who had severed the bond of kinship with him.” (Bukhari, Adab, 15)

Making the visited relatives happy seems as if it only benefits them, but it actually helps the visitor; because visiting relatives not only benefits the visitors in the Hereafter but also in this world, too. The Messenger of Allah explains some of these benefits as follows:

“Whoever is pleased that he be granted more wealth and that his lease of life be prolonged, then he should keep good relations with his kith and kin.” (Bukhari, Adab, 12; Muslim, Birr, 20-21)

In addition to visiting relatives, visiting friends is also very important. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would visit his companions. The following tradition nicely explains this issue:





“A man set out to visit a brother in faith in another town and Allah sent an angel on his way. When the man met the angel, the latter asked him,

“Where do you intend to go?” He said,

“I intend to visit my brother in this town.” The angel said,

“Have you done any favors for him?” He said,

“No, I have no desire except to visit him because I love him for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and Glorious.” Thereupon the angel said,

“I am a messenger to you from Allah (to inform you) that Allah loves you as you love him (for His sake).” (Ibn Hanbal, II, 292)

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “Allah will give shade, to seven, on the Day when there will be no shade but His. (These seven persons are) a just ruler, a youth who has been brought up in the worship of Allah (i.e. worships Allah sincerely from childhood), a man whose heart is attached to the mosques (i.e. to pray the compulsory prayers in the mosque in congregation), two persons who love each other only for Allah’s sake and they meet and part in Allah’s cause only, a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for illicit intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah, a man who gives charitable gifts so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given (i.e. nobody knows how much he has given in charity), and a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes are then flooded with tears.” (Bukhari, Adhan, 36; Zakat, 16)

Companions also attached much importance to visiting family and friends. Abdullah b. Mas’ud (r.a.) asked his friends who came to visit him from Kufa to Medina:

“Do you sit and discuss scholarly issues?” They replied:

“We never stop doing that.” Ibn Mas’ud (r.a.) asked again:

“Do you visit each other?” They said:

“Yes, O Abu Abdurrahman, Some of us even go from one side of Kufa to the other side of it to check his friend, if he does not see him for a while.” This answer pleased Ibn Mas’ud (r.a.) and he told them:

“If you maintain this state of yours, then you would live happily and peacefully.” (Darimi, Muqaddimah, 51)



Salman (r.a.), who knew very well how important this issue was, walked from Medina to Damascus just to visit his friend Abu al-Darda. (Bukhari, *Adab al-Mufrad*, p. 127; no: 346)

There are some manners which need to be observed during such visits. Some of them are as follows:

- Visiting hours should be chosen well. One should avoid going for a visit during the hours of sleep, meals, and working hours.
- If it is possible, the host should be informed in advance. And the visitor should be there exactly at the scheduled time.
- The visitor should wear clean, tidy clothes, and should avoid bad smells and looks.
- Visits should be short. If one is visiting the old, he/she should listen to them carefully and stay away from words, which may hurt them. One should bring good news to them.

S. Manners of Exchanging Gifts

“Give your property and win a heart. Win it so that it can enlighten you in the grave and at that pitch black night.”

Jalal al-Din Rumi,

Exchanging gifts is a nice thing which strengthens the brotherhood ties amongst believers. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) encouraged his followers to exchange gifts with each other. Aisha (r. anha) narrated:

“Allah’s Apostles used to accept gifts and used to give something in return. (Bukhari, Hiba, 11).

According to Anas b. Malik’s report, the Byzantium ruler sent a nice and expensive coat to the Prophet (pbuh). When he wore the coat, people asked him:

“O Messenger of Allah! Have this been sent to you from heavens?” The Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“Have you liked it much? By Allah in whose hand my life is, Sa’d b. Muadh’s towel in Paradise is much better than this.” And then he took off





the coat and gave it to Ja'far. When Ja'far put the coat on, Allah's Messenger (pbuh) told him:

"I did not send it to you to wear?" Ja'far (r.a.) asked:

"What should I do with it?" Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said that:

"Send it to your brother Najashi." (Ibn Hanbal, III, 229; Ibn Athir, *Usdu'l Ghabah*, I, 324)

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) would accept all invitations and gifts, be it little or big. The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"I shall accept the invitation even if I were invited to a meal of a sheep's trotter, and I shall accept the gift even if it were an arm or a trotter of a sheep."* (Bukhari, Hiba, 2)

تَهَادَوْا تَحَابُّوا

"Exchange gifts so that your love to each other will strengthen." (Muwatta, Husnu'l Khulq, 16; Munawi, III, 271) He also explained how exchanging gifts helps to increase love amongst people as follows:

"Exchange gifts, because gifts will cleanse the grudge and anger in the heart. No woman should belittle her gift to the neighboring woman even if it is a piece of lamb trotter." (Tirmidhi, Wala, 6)

Those who give and receive gifts should not look at the amount and the value of the gift. If feelings like bragging, showing off, and self-interest intervene, the expected result cannot be achieved.

Exchanging gifts should be within the limits of financial means and should not constrain one's budget.

According to Islamic manners one should not expect a gift in return for a gift. If this cannot be done, then at least a more valuable gift should not be expected. In this respect, the following incident which occurred between a bedouin and the Messenger of Allah is an exemplary one:

It was narrated by Abu Huraira (r.a.):

A bedouin presented a young camel as a gift. Allah's Messenger gave him six young camels in return. The bedouin did not like his gift. Allah's Mes-



senger (pbuh) heard about it. After praising Allah the Almighty, the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“So and so gave me a camel. I gave him six camels in return. Still he did not become happy. By Allah, I have decided not to get any benefit from people other than Muhajirun, Ansar, people of Quraish, people of Saqif, or from people of Daws.” (Tirmidhi, Manaqib, 73; Abu Dawud, Buyu’ 82)

When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) saw such rude actions from the people around him, he would treat them gently and forgivingly. There are many examples of this in the life of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh). However, the rudeness of the previous incident mentioned above made Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) change his principles about accepting gifts from just anyone.

Giving gifts just to receive bigger gifts in return is not an appropriate behavior. The people who were exempted in the above mentioned hadith are the people known by their generosity, contentedness, and for not expecting anything in return. Receiving gifts from such people gives a person peace and tranquility.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would not refuse a gift unless it was absolutely necessary. However, if it was a situation against Islam, he would put Islam before everything else. Sa’b bin Jaththama (r.a.) narrated:

“An onager was presented to Allah’s Apostle at the place called Al-Abwa or Waddan, but Allah’s Apostle rejected it. When the Prophet noticed the signs of sorrow on the giver’s face he said,

“We could not accept your gift, for we are in the state of Ihram.” (Bukhari, Hiba, 6)

Sa’d b. Jaththama did not know at that time that hunting was prohibited to those who were in a state of *Ihram*. When Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) recognized his companion’s sadness, he made an explanation and consoled his friend. One should strongly avoid the things which may cause misunderstandings.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) would not also accept the gifts of polytheists and non-believers only under exceptional circumstances. He said it was something forbidden.

Iyad ibn Himar (r.a.) reported:





“I presented a she-camel to the Prophet (pbuh). He asked:

“Have you embraced Islam?” I replied:

“No.” The Prophet (pbuh) said:

“I have been prohibited to accept the presents of polytheists.” (Abu Dawud, Kharaj, 35)

However, the state of foreign relations is exceptional. Ali (r.a.) said that “Kisra sent some gifts to the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), and he accepted them. Other rulers also sent gifts to the Prophet (pbuh), which he accepted. (Tirmidhi, Siyar, 23) Because accepting gifts from the head of the states is in the interest of the Muslim society.

Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) also informed us when one should not accept gifts. According to the narration of Abu Umamah (r.a.), the Prophet (pbuh) said that:

“If someone helps another, and the latter gives a gift to the former. If he accepts the gift, he would enter from a big door of usury.” (Abu Dawud, Buyu’, 82) Accepting a gift in return for an act of goodness removes the spiritual rewards of that goodness. Ubada b. Samit said that:

“I taught writing and the Qur’an to some of the companions of Suffa. One of them gave me a bow in return. I thought:

“This is not something big and I will use it for the sake of Allah; but still I will go and ask the Messenger of Allah.” I came to the Prophet (pbuh) and asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! One of the people, which I taught writing and Qur’an, gave me a bow as a gift. This is not a very valuable item for me. I will also use it for the sake of Allah.” Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) responded:

“If you would like to wear an ornament from fire, then accept it.” (Abu Dawud, Buyu’, 37)

In later generations scholars permitted to accept a fee for teaching Qur’an out of necessities. However, it was not permitted in the age of happiness.

Another important manner in exchanging gifts is not to change one’s mind and return the gift. Asking for the gift back is even something worse. Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) makes the following warnings in this context:



“It is unlawful for someone to give a gift and return from it. However a father may return from the gift to his child. He who takes back his present is like a dog that eats, fills itself, and then vomits. After that it swallows back its vomit.” (Abu Dawud, Buyu’, 81)

Employing a metaphor which contains such a disgusting context is to show the severity of the action. It is similar to the metaphor used for backbiting. In backbiting, the action of the one who backbites likens to eating the flesh of the person who is talked about.

Islam has ruled principles which cover every aspect of our lives and has not left any openings. These principles, which present happiness and peace to humanity, were taught to us in the actions and sayings of our excellent exemplar, the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). His and his companion’s teachings present us one of the greatest civilizations of human history.





EPILOGUE

With the help of Allah the Almighty, we are pleased that we have finished presenting a little bit of the exemplary states, behaviors, manners, and morals of our beloved Prophet (pbuh) in the extent of our ability. We feel the happiness, joy, and gratitude for being able to offer a bouquet of roses from his garden of roses.

Allah the Almighty states in the Qur'an, **"He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving."** (al-Mulk 67; 2) and attracts our attention that the goal of one's very short life is to adorn life with deeds which befit His pleasure. In another verse, Allah the Almighty gives us the measure of superiority and shows us the path to reach Him saying that **"...Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you..."** (al-Hujurat 49; 13).

As it is stated in the Prophet's life-long supplication, *"O Allah! There is no life worth living except the life of the Hereafter, so (please) make righteous the Ansar and the Emigrants"* (Bukhari, Riqaq, 1) that the real and eternal life for believers is the life of the Hereafter. One should bear this reality in mind and keep a good balance between this world and the Hereafter. One should value everything in the extent of their worth and perform all his/her duties considering every one of them as an act of worship. The ultimate goal in one's life should be to achieve the knowledge of Allah (*Ma'rifatullah*) and to have one's heart reach a state of peace and tranquility; for the greatest disappointment will be felt by those whom Allah the Almighty will deprive of sincerity and knowledge of Allah on the day when the worldly curtains are risen up and scenes of afterlife become visible. Not knowing Allah and the deprivation of the heart from Him is the greatest disappointment one could feel.

Like a sandglass, the life span bestowed upon us consumes its capital every passing moment little by little. Life is so short that it is just enough to live in accordance with the requirements of the straight path. And when its time is up, there is no recovery. Allah the Exalted warns and guides His servants to



use time wisely by saying, **“By (the token of) time”** (al-Asr 103; 1). In a very meaningful Arabic proverb it is stated that, *الدُّنْيَا سَاعَةٌ فَاجْعَلْهَا طَاعَةً*, “world is (like) an hour, enlighten it with piety and acts of worship.” Everything can be recovered partially or entirely but time can never be recovered. We need to be guided by a true guide in order to be able to walk safely through the ups and downs of life, in order to be able to achieve the knowledge of Allah and reach piety, and in order to get truth, goodness, and beauty in the shortest way. This is why Allah the Almighty did not leave human beings without the guidance of His messengers.

Adorning our lives with the knowledge and love of Allah and performing a perfect servitude to Him can only be possible by walking on the path of our excellent exemplar. The more we follow the measures brought by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) in this world the more peaceful, blessed, and enlightened life we will have in the Hereafter. The level of perfection of our happiness in the afterlife will take place in accordance with the quality, authenticity, and sincerity of our obedience.

What we primarily need to do is to learn the Sunnah of our Prophet (pbuh) and to make every effort to apply them in our lives. Knowing and learning the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) is directly related to faith. The faith of those whose hearts are away from the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) will be weak; whereas faith of those who feel heartfelt love for the Prophet (pbuh) will be strong in the extent of their love. Believers improve themselves on the path of perfection in the extent of their knowledge of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah. Allah the Almighty points to this reality in the Qur’an and says: **“Or do they not recognize their Messenger, and so they deny him?”** (al-Mu’minun 23; 69) If one really recognizes him, they would never deny him.

Revelations and the prophetic mission ended with our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Allah the Almighty completed his message with him and said **“...This day have I perfected your religion for you...”** (al-Maidah 5; 3) His message encompasses every time and place. He is not the Messenger of one nation, one generation, or one group. Moreover, his paradigm is for anybody who opens his/her heart to the light of guidance. Allah the Almighty addresses His Messenger in His book saying:



“We have not sent you but as a universal (Messenger) to men, giving them glad tidings, and warning them (against sin), but most men understand not.” (Saba’ 34; 28)

As for the other messengers of Allah, they were sent to a specific group of people. This is why the messengers were addressed in the Qur’an along with the names of their people (al-Araf 7; 59, 65, 73, 85, 145). While in the Qur’an our Prophet’s (pbuh) address includes the entire humanity. Some of these verses are as follows:

“Say (O Muhammad): O mankind! Lo! I am the Messenger of Allah to you all - (the messenger of) Him unto whom belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no god save Him. He quickens and He gives death...” (al-A’raf 7; 158)

“We sent you not, but as a mercy for all creatures...” (al-Anbiyah 21; 107)

This is why all of humanity needs to know his life, follow his path, and become a proper ummah for him. Besides reading the sources, the shortest way to understand and apply this blessed life, by which Allah the Almighty swears, is to take the lives of Muslim scholars’ and Gnostics’ as examples, to try to be close to them, and to observe the Prophet’s (pbuh) living sunnah in their lives. This is ordered to us by Allah the Exalted in the verse:

وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ

“...and follow the way of those who turn to Me...” (Loqman 31; 15) Because the beautiful examples lived in history are the most effective means of teaching goodness, pure faith, morality, and manners.

By following the lives of earlier exemplary personalities we need to become examples for future generations. Just like how the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) and the people who followed their footsteps became examples for us, we should be examples for the coming generations and thus receive the divine heralds; because Allah the Almighty states in the Qur’an: **“And the first to lead the way, of the Muhajirin and the Ansar, and those who followed them in goodness - Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He hath made ready for them Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the supreme**

triumph.” (al-Tawbah, 9; 100) If we cannot be exemplary Muslims, we will be responsible for neglecting our duty.

“O Allah We ask the same goodness asked from You by the Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh)! We take refuge in You from the same evil that Your Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (pbuh) took refuge in You. Help is expected only from You. You are the only One Who can help a person to reach his goal in this world and in the Hereafter.” (Tirmidhi, Daawat, 89)

“Our Lord (they say), let not our hearts deviate now after You have guided us, but grant us mercy from Your own presence; for You are the grantor of bounties without measure.” (Al-i Imran 3; 8)

“...Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith...” (al-Hashr 59; 10)

“Our Lord! Forgive me and my parents and believers on the day when the account is cast.” (Ibrahim 14; 41)

“...Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and guard us from the doom of Fire.” (al-Baqara 2; 201)

“...Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, blot out from us our iniquities, and take to Yourself our souls in the company of the righteous. Our Lord! Grant us what You did promise unto us through Your Messengers, and save us from shame on the Day of Judgment; for You never break Your promise.” (Al-i Imran 3; 193-194)

“...Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us; our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You art our protector; help us against those who stand against Faith.” (al-Baqara 2; 286)

Amin!

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ





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